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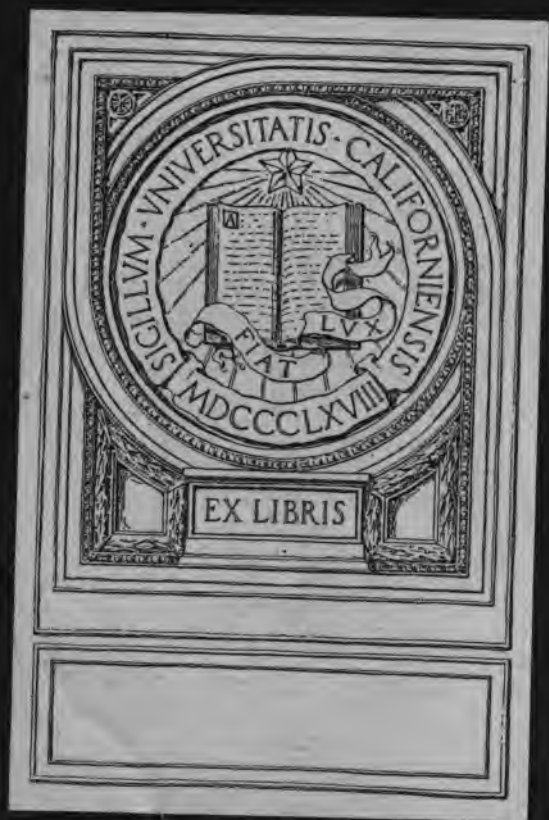
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SISTER**

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TO THE  
ANGLICAN



*From a photograph by Thomas Fall*

**SISTER ETHELDRED**  
**(1910)**

# THE STORY OF AN LOVE SISTER

to you  
 ANTHONY



*(Sister Ethel, 1910)*

SISTER ETHEL  
 (1910)

# THE STORY OF AN ENGLISH SISTER

(ETHEL GEORGINA ROMANES—  
SISTER ETHELDRED)

BY

ETHEL ROMANES

AUTHOR OF "THE LIFE AND LETTERS OF GEORGE JOHN ROMANES, F.R.S.,"  
"THE STORY OF FORT ROYAL," ETC.

"Funes ceciderunt mihi in praeclaris: etenim hereditas mea  
praeclara est mihi."—*Palm* xvi. 6.

"And specially the age of them that willingly and freely offer  
their youth unto God, passingly is rewarded and wonderfully is  
thanked."—*Revelations of Divine Love*.

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TO VINU  
ANBOLIAO

1971

TO  
HER BROTHERS  
HER COMMUNITY  
AND  
TO ALL WHO LOVED HER

458096



## PREFACE

VERY soon after my irreparable sorrow had fallen on me, I was urged by several friends, on whose judgment I could rely, to put together my beloved girl's letters, and with some words of my own give them to those who loved her, and possibly to some who did not know her.

I do not share the opinion of those who think that letters are too sacred for any eyes to see them, excepting the eyes of those persons to whom they were written. I have been much encouraged by Mr. Arthur Benson's words in his Preface to his *Life and Letters of Maggie Benson*. "It seems to me," he writes, "both strange and sad when those who have been in contact with a fine nature involve all their recollections alike in a veil of sacredness which cannot be lifted."

I entirely agree. My dear girl was one of those who encouraged many souls—she had many gifts and graces, and I think the sacred fruit of joy was granted to her. Of course, sorrows come to us all, and she had her own, and faced them. I and others who saw her in those last months calmly facing death, with no desire for an early passing, yet with absolute self-surrender to the Will of God, know whence that calmness and sweetness came.

She was deeply reserved, and was not inclined to say much of the experiences which are the portion of souls who live the life of prayer, but the keynote of her life—the reason of her acceptance of the Call



## Preface

to serve God in the Religious Life was devotion to our Blessed Lord. All elect souls have their special attraction. Love for our Lord, I believe, was hers. The remembrance of the very few times we ever spoke to each other on these topics makes me feel the truth of my words. She united the most fervent Evangelical piety with the full acceptance of Catholic truth and devotion to the Sacraments. She loved the hymns of Wesley and Watts, and her chief favourite was "Love Divine, all loves excelling."

Perhaps the record, so simple and so vivid, will help some to realise that it is possible to live the Christian Life joyfully—to have Alleluia on the lips and in the heart; to pass through the grave and Gate of Death to the Life beyond in sure hope, undying faith and ever-growing love.

As will be seen, the letters are nearly all written to me. I am very grateful to Mrs. James Peck and to my son, Mr. N. H. Romanes, for the letters they have given me, and for their "appreciations" of Ethel; to the dear friend whose name does not appear in the letters she generously gave me, and to all whose letters appear in the book.

I have omitted the name of Ethel's Community, as English Religious dislike publicity. I think, however, the letters I have printed will show how happy and blessed the Religious Life can be, how absolutely unlike the ideas which have been prevalent concerning it. I confess that Mrs. Craven's words in her *Récit d'une Sœur* (Vol. I. p. 210), when she speaks of what she felt when she found that she must write about her dearly loved Sister Eugénie, express my own mind—

"J'ai connu d'autres tristresses et des tristresses non moins profondes, mais celle-ci est accompagnée

## Preface

d'un attendrissement que je ne puis surmonter, et auquel je ne puis me livrer sans souffrance; celle-ci s'empare de moi tout entière et me rend incapable de tout, hormis de pleurer. . . . C'est de réveiller vivement en moi le souvenir de sa tendresse . . . dont tant que je vivrai, je ne pourrai jamais retrouver les expressions sans que tout mon cœur se fonde en regrets tendres, inconsolables et en retours poignants vers ce passé dont la réalité ne me sera rendue que dans l'éternelle béatitude de l'amour sans fin."

One word I must add of thanks to my friend Miss Enid Maude, without whose aid I do not think I could have compiled this book.

ETHEL ROMANES.

*Feast of the Epiphany, 1918.*

P.S.—I have omitted to state that Ethel after her Clothing took the name of Etheldred.



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# THE STORY OF AN ENGLISH SISTER

## CHAPTER I

CHILDHOOD—SCHOOL DAYS (1880-1898)

THOSE who have read the *Life of George John Romanes, F.R.S.*, may possibly remember a page of reminiscences contributed by his only daughter, a girl of fifteen at the time I wrote the book. She has joined her father in the world beyond the veil, and she was so remarkable in many ways that I have been asked by several friends to try to write about her—the *Récit d'une Mère* this might be called. Few mothers have been more blessed in their children than the writer—few have had to bear the loss of so many, so dear, so much loved and loving. And she of whom I write was the eldest of all these—the one sweet daughter of whom her father wrote—

“ While snowdrops, breathed by breath of spring,  
With gladness deck the earth,  
And winter-wakened skylarks sing  
The heralds of thy birth,  
Thou comest with the opening year  
Our wedded life to bless.”

She grew up in a very happy home—the only girl, followed quickly by two brothers, and at longer intervals by three others. She was our Princess and ruled over the small band. She, who was

## The Story of an English Sister

destined to the Vocation of leaving all for Christ's sake, was not in the least a model little girl or precociously religious. She was high-spirited and fearless, fond of outdoor games, a great tease, with a most tender little heart for other people's sorrows. She learned to read with almost alarming ease—well do I remember carrying her and that classic work *Reading without Tears* into the library at Cornwall Terrace, when she was about three years old, and making her display her newly discovered powers to her father, who was at first incredulous, and then astonished, for he had not taken kindly to books in his early years.

I was a very young mother and terribly keen on education. All kinds of new movements were going on around me. I sat on the Council of a Society for promoting Kindergarten principles. We were all very earnest and the members evidently thought salvation was to be found in the teaching of Froebel. With the exception of Mr. Claude Montefiore, and possibly myself, no one of the little Council ever smiled. I used to try to put some of the theories I heard advocated into practice, but I do not know that they advanced much, for Ethel defied Froebel by learning to read.

Ours was a very happy home. Possibly I was too eager about lessons, but for one thing Ethel and her next brother always thanked me, and that was that they learned early to swim. I took them to swimming baths at an early age, and their skill became very great. We had a French daily governess for some time, and I am afraid my small daughter led her sedate, fair-haired, and rather solemn brother to play many pranks on the lady, whose fate it was to accompany their walks in Regent's Park. At that period

## Childhood—School Days

of existence, Ethel ruled over her two brothers—Ernest,<sup>1</sup> who was only fifteen months younger than herself, and Gerald,<sup>2</sup> her junior by four years. In the summer months we went to Scotland and from 1883 to 1890 our Scottish home was at Geanies, Ross-shire.

Those years at Geanies represented the golden age to Ethel—or Fritz, as she was commonly known from the age of six. I called her this because we had played at being the Swiss Family Robinson and the name stuck, for her father said he was always confusing between his brace of Ethels. I will quote her description of life at Geanies from my husband's *Life*—

“When we were at Geanies, our greatest delight was ‘to go out shooting with Father.’ We used to tramp for hours together over turnip and grass fields behind my father and the gamekeeper. We used to enjoy the expeditions so much better if our father was the only sportsman, for then we had him all to ourselves. We were very small then; our ages were ten, nine and six respectively, but we were good walkers and we never became tired. What little sunburnt, healthy, grubby children we were, to be sure! When Bango, the setter, pointed at a covey, we all had to stand quite still while our father walked forward towards the dog. Directly the covey rose we all ‘ducked’ for safety. I shall never forget the joy and pride we all felt when a bird fell, and we ran with shouts of triumph to pick it up. Then the delight of eating lunch under a hedge or in a wood! That was a time of jokes and fun, and we talked as freely and unrestrainedly as we liked about all kinds

<sup>1</sup> Died in 1910.

<sup>2</sup> Now (1918) Lt.-Col. Romanes, D.S.O.



## The Story of an English Sister

of subjects. Then came some more tramping in the turnips, and we would journey homewards, a weary but very happy little party. The counting of the game would follow, and our pride was very great when the number of brace was high, for we felt that we had been helping our father to slay the partridges. In fact, we thought that Sandy, the gamekeeper, was a very useless personage when we went out, for did not we mark as well as, or better than, he did? And surely we could carry the game bags: they were not very heavy even when they were full to bursting!"

The Murrays,<sup>1</sup> from whom we rented Geanies, lived at another place, which subsequently came into our possession, and which we rented the first two years of our married life. It was the great amusement of our children to spend the day at Pitcalzean, or, as it was then called, Westfield. Why this very commonplace name had been allowed to take the place of the old and charming title Pitcalzean, which means "Town of the Wood," I have never been able to discover. A day at Pitcalzean was bliss—there was a charming garden, full of fruit and a long avenue leading down to the sea. A mile further along the shore was the house belonging to my sister-in-law, Miss Charlotte Romanes, where one could build castles on the sands all day long and return at intervals into Dunskaith, which is almost in the sea, to be refreshed by drinks which only Aunt Charlotte could supply—orangeade and wonderful huge sponge cakes, the like of which I have never seen. Then one could return, probably in auntie's pony carriage, to Pitcalzean, where delicacies awaited one only to be met with there: chocolate pudding, wonderful cakes,

<sup>1</sup> Distant cousins of my husband, and my dear friends.

## Childhood—School Days

and to Ethel's mind not the least attractive pleasure was a book shelf, where were the *Fairchild Family* and some other old-fashioned books, not found amongst our home books. She knew the *Fairchild Family* by heart, and in after years when we had a copy would regale her family with readings from it. The favourite chapter was the one which describes a visit to the gallows, on which hung the body of a fratricide, and to which the unfortunate Fairchild children were led by their father, as a punishment for quarrelling. It is a comfort to think that nowadays he would probably be prosecuted by the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children.

At Dunskaith I discovered long years after that Ethel and Ernest read and re-read the book by Mr. Myers on *Psychical Research*. I had strictly forbidden the mention of the word ghost to my children, and fondly imagined they had never been troubled with fears of the unseen.

We mothers are often left in utter ignorance of what our children suffer. For about two years I had a perfectly fiendish nurse, who kept the children in health, groomed them to perfection, and when my youthful back was turned amused herself by frightening them in such ways as her imagination suggested. I noticed a great devotion to me on Ethel's part about this time. She was always looking for me and hated to be out of my sight, but she never complained of anything, and, as she told me afterwards, simply imagined that it was in the course of nature nurses should torment and mothers pet their children. In January 1885 all this kind of trouble ceased. Our Nannie came to us and the children suffered no more. Nannie has seen three of her children pass before her into the land beyond. And I must not

## The Story of an English Sister

in these fragmentary reminiscences forget our dear "Cousin Maia," Miss Marian Romanes, who both before and after my husband's death often stayed with us, and who loved my children only less than I did. I still miss her.

When we were in London the children used to come down after tea. I can see my two E.'s, as I called them, sitting together in a big armchair looking at Caldecott or Mrs. Ewing's delicious *A Sweet Little Dear* and *Soldier's Children*, etc., or standing at the piano singing out of the *Baby's Opera* and the *Baby's Bouquet*.

Birthdays and Christmas Days were great occasions. We used to have a children's party at Christmas time, and I remember Ernest and the present Mrs. George Trevelyan, then Miss Janet Ward, a young and very athletic maiden, sitting in wild excitement over Punch and Judy and screaming to the policeman to catch Mr. Punch. Ethel had been presented with a rocking horse, which is still in existence, and over whose back Janet vaulted to the admiration and envy of my daughter.

As I have said, Fritz, as she was always known up to the day when she left us, was not in the least a specimen of early piety, but she liked going to church and enjoyed singing hymns and gazing at the Vicar, the Rev. J. W. Festing, afterwards Bishop of St. Albans, who had baptized her and for whom she had a great affection. In after years she used to pretend to reproach me for bringing her up to attend Matins and turning her out with the school children before the Eucharist. In those days several elementary truths had not dawned on me, and among them was that attendance at the Eucharist by children—or for that matter by any one else who was

## Childhood—School Days

not communicating—was desirable. I taught her and her brothers as best I could up to my lights, and I never had any trouble in teaching them the Catechism and verses out of the Bible, which I did orally. I never set them to learn the Duty to One's Neighbour or any other part of the Catechism by heart. Miss Yonge's various books were very useful, and the elder children and I read a large portion of her *Scripture Readings and Comments*, and her other books together. Fritz never much liked being read to, and I could not induce her to love Scott or Miss Yonge<sup>1</sup>—a sort of treason in my eyes to these beloved writers, but I remember no other difference in taste. She was very musical and we had a most delightful singing class presided over by a perfect genius, Miss Mills, who taught children to do the most surprising feats. Poor Ernest, who was not very musical and intensely dreamy, suffered tortures both at this and the dancing class, where Fritz was a shining light.

In the summer of 1888 a cousin of my husband's, Sister Ella of St. Saviour's Priory, spent some weeks at Geanies and she quite unconsciously impressed Fritz enormously. About the same time a book of my youth was being devoured by her—*Chronicles of St. Mary's*—a book about a Community and the persecutions and calumny the poor Sisters and their Chaplain endured. I rather think East Grinstead and Dr. Neale were the originals. This fired Fritz, who at the mature age of eight decided that a Sister's life was the state *she* wished to enter. Sister Ella had no idea of this and never knew until she was gently teased about it by Fritz in her Novice's habit

<sup>1</sup> In these early days, I mean; she appreciated Miss Yonge in later years, but was not a great lover of Sir Walter.

## The Story of an English Sister

full of happiness and that peculiar radiancy which characterised her.

In one of these happy summers Ernest's future wife came to see us—a gentle little girl not much used to children, whose high spirits, and in the case of Fritz, love of teasing, made them rather terrific people to be thrown among. Our guest escaped with her life and retained a vivid impression of being made to ride on a pony and much laughed at for being frightened. To this day I do not know whether close supervision, or turning children out to run wild as I did at Geanies, is best. Certainly it answered well with ours—they grew up healthy, sturdy creatures; but perhaps I ought not to have left guests to their tender mercies. I was still very young and always had many visitors to look after, but I taught them lessons every day and then dismissed them. A young cousin who had been educated in Germany came to teach our children German. In 1890 we moved to Oxford and there our two youngest boys were born. All the children grew to love the place passionately. We sent Fritz to the High School for Girls, which she enjoyed, and where she did very well and made several friends and began that long career of playing games, which did so much for her and was not useless even after she had “entered religion,” for though she could not play hockey or cricket she encouraged those who did and was as anxious about her “House” winning as she ever had been in the days of her youth.

She left the High School at the end of 1894, but she had been away with us in 1893 at Madeira, and in 1892 she went with us to the Engadine and had long climbs and walks. At Madeira she swam so much that she was known to one or two friends as the Sea Urchin.

## Childhood—School Days

In the summer of 1894 my husband died. Fritz was being prepared for Confirmation by the Rev. Charles Gore, then Vicar of Radley and had made her First Communion at my husband's side in 1893, when Dr. Paget, then Dean of Christ Church, gave him what we feared would be his Viaticum. Fritz has told me since that she was not really very religious at that time. She reminds me a little bit of Miss Yonge, who tells us she felt a sort of impatience of sorrow when she was a child. She was confirmed by the Bishop of St. Albans, who had baptized her, on July 13, 1894. But little by little after our great sorrow, she became everything to me—a support and a great friend as well as a dear child. In the beginning of 1896 she went to Dresden and was in a German family, together with the present Mrs. Lionel Ford and her sister, Miss Lavinia Talbot, and also with Mrs. Guy Stephenson, then Miss Gwendolen Talbot, one of the daughters of the late Mr. John Talbot, M.P. Fritz had a "lovely time," as Americans say. She already, thanks to our cousin and to the High School, knew German fairly well, and she naturally learned to speak fluently. She had violin and piano lessons, and she, with the Talbots, delighted in the Opera and Concerts they heard with all their powers of enjoyment. Fritz told me many amusing anecdotes of the German household, in which she lived, which fit in remarkably well with all we have come to learn of Germany. One day they were discussing the All Highest, and Fritz, with British fearlessness, said that something or other the Kaiser had done or said was "very stupid" (*sehr dumm*). She was implored, as soon as the waiting-maid had left the room, to be more careful, as if the maid were to feel spiteful and repeat the speech of the irreverent

## The Story of an English Sister

Engländerin the poor ladies would be speedily sent to prison. Fritz herself experienced the watchful care of the paternal Government. She had a very mild attack of scarlatina, and was removed to the hospital in an official ambulance with a policeman on the box. But to do the authorities justice, the care and nursing were excellent—she had a pleasant room to herself, and when she was able to go into the garden a German boy, who had had measles, was sent to keep her company. He questioned her closely on the manners and customs of English school-boys, and Fritz, who had by this time two brothers at a public school, drew a rosy picture of the life of the English boy, which made her German friend sigh deeply. I often wonder if he is now fighting against her brothers.

Fritz came back in the summer after a tour with me in the Black Forest. At Freiburg, in Breisgau, we met Professor Weissman, who had two years before given the Romanes Lecture at Oxford. He came to lunch with us and was unconsciously most amusing. He was surprised to hear that Bishop Talbot held perfectly sound views on Scientific Research and that various well-known theologians were also believers in the doctrine of evolution.

*Elisen Strasse I<sup>a</sup>, Dresden.*

*June 11, 1896.<sup>1</sup>*

DEAREST MOTHER,

Fräulein Müller came the day before yesterday and fetched me away from the hospital in a droschky. It was awfully jolly to get back here again; everybody is so kind. S.'s mother is so

<sup>1</sup> This is after her illness. Fräulein Müller, the kind lady with whom she boarded.

## Childhood—School Days

nervous, and so is S. herself, that it was thought better that, till the six weeks are quite up, she and I should not see each other, so I have two rooms upstairs to myself—very cosy and comfy, and either Frl. Müller or Frau Assessor go out with me, while the other goes out with S.<sup>1</sup> Frl. Müller also has her meals upstairs with me. It really is most awfully good of them to take such heaps of trouble. They've moved my photographs and things upstairs to make it look snug, and did all they could to make it look jolly for me—not to speak of all the bother of having two sets of meals. If it wasn't for S. all this would not be, for they themselves are not a bit afraid, and I see all of them every day—even little Erna. I know the Family would be awfully pleased if you wrote and told them how jolly you think it is of them. They're so jolly and lively too, and treat it all as a joke, not a bit as though they were martyrs. I have a separate staircase to go out by.

Your letter came yesterday. This certainly is a delicious plan. It will be tremendous sport to go to Switzerland.<sup>2</sup>

After we returned to Oxford Ethel was coached by Mrs. Middleton, a sister of the Rev. H. Urling Whelpton, of Eastbourne. Mrs. Middleton is to this day one of the cleverest of teachers I have ever met, and was successful not only with my brilliant daughter, but with less industrious and less clever pupils. But in November 1896 a very notable and clever lady appeared in Oxford for a function at Lady Margaret Hall and did me the honour to come and

<sup>1</sup> I quite sympathise with the said nervousness !

<sup>2</sup> I went out to Germany to meet her, and we had a delightful tour.



## The Story of an English Sister

stay with me. This was Miss Dove, who was just beginning her work at Wycombe. She showed us photographs of the place and told us about St. Andrews, where, indeed, I had had an inclination to send Fritz; and in a few days I discovered through Cousin Maia that my darling had a great desire to go to Wycombe, but was stifling it as she did not like to propose leaving home again. So to Wycombe she went and never was a girl so happy. The free, joyous life and the games which were promoted and encouraged by the authorities, excellent teaching, and last, but not least, the delightful friends she made and kept all the rest of her short life—all these elements made her time at Wycombe intensely happy as her letters show.

In 1897 we returned to our London home, 18 Cornwall Terrace, N.W. I have said nothing of Ethel's great love for dogs. She had many beloved animals, but Rex, the pug given to her by me for Christmas 1894, reigned supreme. He was almost human in his power of affection and understanding. He was brought up in good ways: "died" for Lord Halifax and barked for Kensit at the word of command.

*Wycombe Abbey,  
January 24, 1897.*

This place is most awfully jolly; I am beginning to like it very much. I think the teaching is very good indeed on the whole, and the standard of the girls' capacity is also high, which helps a great deal, as at the High School we always had to wait for the absolute idiots. The history is not so good as the history I've been doing lately, of course,<sup>1</sup> but it is

<sup>1</sup> With Miss Whelpton (Mrs. Middleton), who had taken honours in history.

## Childhood—School Days

quite fair. The person who teaches us is a good-natured creature, who made a few startling remarks when talking of the Reformation, *i. e.* that only a few very weak-minded people used Confession in the Church of England (!) I felt inclined to remark that a great portion of the English must be noted for their want of strength of mind, but refrained, owing to the fact that I am a new girl.

Sunday is a jolly day. I went to early service this morning, and then had breakfast with the one other girl who went, Miss Dove and one or two of the mistresses. It was rather trying as no one knew what to say, being in awe of Miss Dove. Then we went to read for a little while—"silent hour" it is called. Then as a rule comes Miss Dove's first class (unconfirmed), but to-day she had the whole school in to hear about a new home mission society called "The United Girls' School Society," which must be respectable, as the Bishop of Rochester<sup>1</sup> is at the head of it, and it is in connection with the R.D.S. Mrs. Lathbury<sup>2</sup> is the secretary. There is going to be a new mission started in S.-E. London, which girls' schools are supposed to help.

May 30, 1897.

How awful about Mrs. Burrows;<sup>3</sup> I can't imagine anything more sad. I wish I had known her; May

<sup>1</sup> Now Bishop of Winchester.

<sup>2</sup> Mrs. Lathbury was one of the best and most delightful of London hostesses. Mr. Lathbury was for many years editor of *The Guardian*. Ethel and I loved them both, and adored the short-lived *Pilot*.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Burrows was Miss Mary Talbot, the eldest daughter of John Talbot, Esq., M.P. She married the Rev. Winfrid Burrows, Principal of Leeds Theological College, and now Bishop of Truro. She had been for a short time Vice-Principal of Lady Margaret Hall, of which she had been a student. To know her was to love her. The three referred to in the letter are her cousins and sister.

## The Story of an English Sister

and Winnie and Gwen have told me so much about her that I almost feel as if I had. It must have been very shocking for you, who have seen her so lately. It seems such a short time since April year, when the Dresden party was so full of happiness for her in her marriage. Poor Gwen! I have written to her.

July 18, 1897.

I was so glad to hear that I *was* Godmother;<sup>1</sup> I was wondering whether I was all Friday.

This term has flown simply. Our Certificate examinations are over, I am thankful to say, and there is very little to do now till the end of term, as next week the mathematical people will be doing their examinations and the rest of us don't do regular lessons, but improve our minds by reading, etc. The Certificate examinations were extremely horrid—especially the history ones. I don't suppose for one moment that I'm through, but it is a great comfort to have them over; I really was beginning to get quite head-achy and worn-out!!

October 28, 1897.

What fun it will be about Port Royal,<sup>2</sup> and what a clever mother I have got, to be sure. It is a good thing it is a secret, otherwise I am afraid I should brag so!

As she was eighteen during her time at Wycombe, I suggested to Miss Dove that it would be unconventional and amusing if I presented Ethel while she was at school, which accordingly was done and

<sup>1</sup> To the child of a favourite maid.

<sup>2</sup> I had been advised to write a book on Port Royal.

## Childhood—School Days

her letters contain several amusing allusions to her appearance at Court.

Long years after her Court train was made up into a Frontal for the Altar in the little Chapel of our Scottish home.

January, 1898.

We've just had a jolly gift to the Library—all of Thackeray, *Deeds that won the Empire*, and Ranji's *Cricket*.

Miss Dove overwhelmed me at breakfast by informing me of your little plan, which I had always thought was a joke. For some hours I might have been likened to a bear with a sore head, as you may imagine; my one hope now is that I shall be finely smashed about the face at hockey some time soon!

January 27, 1898.

Thank you for your letter. About the Drawing Room—of course it is just as you like—I suppose it *could* be managed; only personally I do rather think it would be a rush—not having my dress, and not knowing how to courtesy, and feeling altogether rather like a fish out of water. Is there any special advantage in having it early? Still, of course, if you would rather, Miss Dove does not seem to object.

The girls have been chaffing me tremendously about it! They have made up all kinds of imaginary incidents—like to happen to a characteristically “Rummy” person, such as hair descending, train tripping, lace tearing, going up to the wrong Royalty, etc.

January 30, 1898.

I should very much like to have Mr. Gore's book for Lent, as Dean Church will be about finished by then.

## The Story of an English Sister

A lot of the VI (those who learn literature) and VII are going to see *Julius Cæsar* at Her Majesty's. They will take the rest of the VI (including me!) if there are seats enough; I suppose you don't mind? The seats will be got cheaply.

February 18, 1898.

When is that dreadful Drawing Room? I am having lessons in courtseying to the amusement of the whole school. I do hope it won't make me miss the House matches!

February 18, 1898.

The Drawing Room is horribly near, but still it will be over all the sooner. Do you know how long I shall have to be away for it? I am sure you would be sorry for me if you saw and heard the amount of chaff I have to endure from Miss Dove downwards!

After her birthday—

February 20, 1898.

So many, many thanks for your dear letter *and* the sweets *and* Mr. Gore *and* Mr. Hobhouse; they are all so delightful that I really don't know which is the nicest. It was so tantalising—I had a music lesson all through the interval—when we get our letters, so I had to wait till dinner time before fetching them; and all through the morning, when I met girls in the passages, they said “Ethel, there are such *tons* of parcels for you, and other letters”—or “Many happy returns, Ethel; I know it must be your birthday because of all the letters and parcels!” So you can fancy the excitement of opening them. It was such a jolly day altogether yesterday, as lessons were very successful, and successful lessons are nicer than no lessons.

## Childhood—School Days

The Confirmation is to be to-morrow at 11, so we are having no lessons at all in the morning; we go into school at 4. This week will be much broken into altogether owing to Church on Wednesday and Thursday.

We went to the organ recital on Thursday; it was very fine; he played some splendid things, specially one of Bach's.

Here is an exam.-howler by one of our small people: "Vanity Fair was written by Tennyson in Queen Elizabeth's time, describing the vanity of Queen Elizabeth and her court."

June 2, 1898.

It is *so* nice to hear of Giles's getting better<sup>1</sup>: you can imagine with what joy your p.c.'s are welcomed (not only by me, but by all interested, and they are many!). I do trust he will begin soon to mend more quickly. I got here all right on Monday, but the train was so late; it dawdled along at the rate of between 15 and 20 miles an hour; so I did not get to the school till half-past one, and had dinner in solitary state—with people, however, constantly flocking in to enquire after Giles. You see he is well-known here—by his photograph.

June 5, 1898.

How splendid about Giles—it is so nice to get such jolly news. Do you think you will still go abroad, or are you putting it off till later?

By the way, I have always forgotten to tell you that the people who learn Greek here are all going to see the *Antigone* at Bradfield on the 25th. I can go, can't I? It will be fun.

<sup>1</sup> Giles had been dangerously ill, but was given back to us. He fell seventeen years later in the Dardanelles Expedition, 1915. Ethel came home to see him.

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Is the *Baby's Opera*<sup>1</sup> still in existence? If so, would you send it, or tell Bumpus to send it and put it down to me. Some musical tableaux are being got up for the entertainment of missionaries, and when I let out that we had the immortal work I was instantly fallen upon.

June 16, 1898.

Just a line after a very exciting and laborious day. To begin with, our classical mistress marched up to me and announced that I had been chosen to spout a Horace Ode on Speech Day! So I began to learn it, and continued to learn it at different times throughout the day. Why they should fix on me of all people, who can't learn a line of English by heart I don't know.

July 10, 1898.

It is such a lovely day to-day; we are all looking forward to a lazy afternoon under the trees. I got another letter from one of those girls who came last Monday; poor things, they certainly do seem to have enjoyed themselves hugely. It was quite embarrassing—one evening at prayers Miss Dove said—"So many letters have been received by different people from the Mission girls, that I thought you might like to hear them"; so she read them all out; and two of them sent such quaint messages to "Miss Roamans"! Thereby causing the school to yell with laughter and gaze at me!

A girl said to me the other day, "Do you think it is wrong to read the Bible in playtime?" I was a little amazed, until I remembered that the Scripture examination comes off in less than a fortnight: I'm

<sup>1</sup> Walter Crane's *Baby's Opera*—a lovely book.

## Childhood—School Days

sure a moral might be drawn from that by enemies of the exam. system !

*July 17, 1898.*

How is Giles getting on ? Are we going to Scotland straight away ? This afternoon has been such a sleepy one. It is so hot, I was trying to read Stanley's *Jewish Church*, and had to yield to Morpheus under a tree instead. You can't think how pretty the House study looks ; there are such shoals of flowers in the gardens now, and people cover their shelves with them.

*July 21, 1898.*

Another troop of Mission people are coming down on Saturday. To-morrow our House is going to drive eleven miles to a very pretty wood and have tea. We shall start about 4 and get back by 9. It will be great fun, and very refreshing after Latin prose. I saw quite by accident the other day in the *Eton Chronicle* that Private Gerald Romanes had shot for Charterhouse *v.* Eton and came out 3rd. Charterhouse beat Eton by a lot. I felt so proud !



## CHAPTER II

### EARLY YOUTH AND LADY MARGARET HALL (1898-1902)

AFTER Wycombe Ethel came home and attended some lectures in the Women's Department at King's College. Divinity had been admirably taught at Wycombe, and she began now to feel the great attraction of Theology. Dr. Robertson, the then Principal of King's College, and afterwards Bishop of Exeter, gave lectures to women, and Fritz greatly enjoyed them. She also took up work at the United Girls' Schools Settlement, to which Miss Dove had introduced the Wycombe girls. Here she made one great friend, who, like herself, entered the Religious Life, but who is still spared to her community.

Our summers were spent in Scotland; for some years after my husband's death I rented a charming place in Perthshire—Balmyle—and there with our dear Cousin Marian we spent some delightful summers. Fritz was an enthusiastic bicyclist, and she and her brothers sometimes went long tours on their machines. I remember once during an Easter vacation she, Gerald and Ernest bicycled around the Shakespeare country and finally rode up from Coventry to London in one day—a distance of about ninety miles. Many friends came to us at Balmyle, among them the present Bishop of London. I remember a terrible game of hockey on bicycles, in which his machine suffered considerably. We were in Bishop Wilkin-son's diocese and met him very often.

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We were all much excited about the building of a little church to take the place of a wooden shed in which we had been worshipping, and the Bishop came over a good many times to stir up the interest of the various neighbours. Mr. Jervois stayed with us, and it was a great joy to make him and our Bishop known to each other. We were certainly very merry in those days at Balmye.

And at this time another influence came into her life. In Oxford we usually attended the Cathedral—I sometimes escaped to St. Barnabas, which, rather funnily, my “young theologian,” as she was afterwards called, did not like. Cathedral services are not particularly adapted to the young, and in the light of later years I should never take any young thing to a Cathedral, except occasionally for Evensong. And Christ Church, much as I loved it, was an extraordinarily unsuitable place for children. In term time the ordinary congregation sat far out of sight of the Altar, and the sermons were quite above children’s heads. I was fairly Catholic in my beliefs and practices, but the idea of taking children to Mass or the Eucharist, or anything like daily attendance at Mass myself, never occurred to me. I learnt these things by slow degrees when we returned to London and settled down at St. Mary Magdalene’s Church, of which Mr. Jervois up to 1905, and since then Mr. Giraud, were Vicars, and became Ethel’s great friends and advisers. I have written what I felt about Mr. Jervois in a small privately printed memoir of him, and happily Mr. Giraud is still with us. Mr. Trevelyan was then Vicar of St. Matthew’s, Westminster, of which our two Vicars had been assistant clergy. We used to call the two churches and their clergy “the family”; and, indeed, there was, and still

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is, an extraordinarily beautiful atmosphere of prayer, of kindness, of the spirit of worship in these churches. Only two other churches have ever shared the love which I feel for St. Mary Magdalene; and they are All Saints, Margaret Street, and St. Matthew's, Westminster.

In 1898 I became convinced that Fritz, with her great abilities, her love for girls of her own age, and her skill at games, was the kind of girl who ought to go to college—all the more because there was no need for her to earn her own living. I recognise now how unconsciously I was helping my darling to prepare for the Religious Life. School and college fitted her for living in community. She learned tolerance and ability to see things from other people's point of view, and the very moderate amount of school and college discipline was perhaps also an aid to the acceptance of the rule of obedience which was so joyfully fulfilled in after years. Of course, these things do not create vocation. God alone does that—but they are all aids. Probably a novice who has always lived at home and who has been an only daughter will find the secular (so to speak) part of the Religious Life—the getting on with people who are not of the same milieu as herself, much more difficult than the novice who has seen a good deal of the world in many places. One evening Ethel and I walked up and down the terrace of Balmyle House and discussed Oxford. We made up our minds that she ought to go to Lady Margaret Hall, if Miss Wordsworth would have her. In October 1899 she began those four years of hard reading and hard playing which were so full of enjoyment. Two of her greatest friends at school joined her at Lady Margaret, and she made other friendships. To know Miss Words-

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worth and to love her was a liberal education in itself, and there was Miss Annie Sellar, the Vice-Principal, too early lost to Oxford, though happily not to the world, and several other "Dons" who were inspiring and vigorous. At first Fritz read Classics and worked hard at them. After a year or so she began to read for the Honours School of Theology. Her tutor was Dr. Kidd, to whom she owed a great deal, and she went to many lectures. She especially loved those which Dr. Sanday and Dr. Bigg gave.

In 1900 our present home, which we had known so well in the Geanies days, came into our possession. Pitcalzean (for we at once restored the old name) was called by Mrs. Ernest Romanes, while she was still Miss Scott, the House of Peace. We all felt it to be entirely home. A mile away down on the shore of the Cromarty Firth is Dunskaith—a place which then belonged to my sister-in-law, Miss Charlotte Romanes, and which now belongs to my sons, Colonel and Captain Romanes; and my husband had spent his summers there for many years before our marriage. He had rented Pitcalzean<sup>1</sup> for the sake of shooting, and it was in the garden there he first asked me to be his wife; and curiously enough it was at Pitcalzean that Ernest made his love known to her who became to our great joy one of us. It is a delightful place. We had added a wing to the house, which gave us enough room for our large party and our many guests, and we turned one of the rooms into a chapel, which became a great feature, for the Bishop of Moray and Ross (Bishop Kelly) blessed it, and a notice of its existence was duly placed in the *Scottish Year Book*. We kept a chapel-book, and as one turns over the leaves it is with a sad pleasure one reads the names

<sup>1</sup> It is always known to the family as "Pit."

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of many who ministered to us there. The Bishop of London, the present Archbishop of York, Mr. Jervois, Mr. Trevelyan (then Warden of Liddon House), Father Longridge (of the Community of the Resurrection), and Father Waggett, S.S.J.E. As I write his name I feel I ought to have said before how great a friend he was of my dear girl! I have spoken of him in the *Life* of my husband. During the years Ethel was growing up he was much abroad, but on his return we often saw him; and he was, and is, one of our dearest friends, known to all my children as Uncle Philip. The late Bishop Collins of Gibraltar spent nearly a month at Pitcalzean in 1908, and impressed us all by his extraordinary knowledge.

These are a few letters written soon after she left Wycombe

[On a bicycling tour with Ernest and Gerald.]

*Pullar's Hotel, Kingussie,  
September 5, 1898.*

We have had the most glorious day. As far as Pitlochry we went very quickly in spite of a dawdle on the top of the hill. We got quite quickly to Blair Atholl too, and had a kind of second breakfast there about 10. We started again at 11, and at first had a splendid level road through the most gorgeous scenery: the Grampians in the distance with lovely dark blue shadows upon their purple sides, and a rushing waterfall stream rushing past, and woods all round. After a bit we began ascending the road into the Grampians; this was the stiffest part of our ride; the sun was burning and the road was very much like the end of the road to Pitlochry—no shade, nothing but heather and the same long unending hill for about 13 miles;

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the mountains were gorgeous; but we got a little tired especially Gerry. Near the top E.'s tyres both punctured and he tried in vain to mend them. Then came three more long weary miles walking with him, and we reached a station. A convenient train came at that moment, into which E. and his cycle got. Gerry and I continued our way—this time down-hill for 20 miles, coasting the whole time—*délicieux*; it rested both of us. Three more miles and here we are—very hungry, as we have had nothing since Blair Atholl except lemonade.

*Royal Hotel, Tain,  
September 7, 1898.*

Ernest told you about yesterday while Gerry and I looked over the Cathedral. We left Inverness rather late, as E.'s tyres again gave way, but we reached Cròmarty about 4. We crossed the ferry and saw a good many of our Cottage friends and they were touchingly glad to see us. One old lady said, "Ah, we shall be seein' more of ye when ye come back to your rights," or words to that effect. We saw our old housemaid Christina too and she was very glad to see us. She has two jolly little boys. All these visits took time and it was dark when we got here, although the actual ride has been much shorter than the other days. Geanies to-morrow.

[On a round of visits in Scotland.]

*The Fusilier, Loch Linnhe,  
September 30, 1898.*

The steamer is going up a lake in the most glorious scenery imaginable—great dark-blue mountains all round, with their heads hidden in the clouds. The loch is perfectly calm—there is no fear of the sort of

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thing I endured on Tuesday! You must excuse execrable writing, however, as the boat shakes a good deal. I had a very jolly time at Oban, though it poured the whole time without stopping, which prevented any expeditions.

Last night there was a kind of social gathering for the Church, to which we all went. The Dean of Argyll presided; there were such funny people who sang and played. I think the Dean must have heard my name as he came and spoke to me, and looked as if he was going to say something, only other people came up. One of his curates, an honest and enthusiastic Glasgy youth, did blurt out to me how much good the book <sup>1</sup> does among young men about here.

18 Cornwall Terrace, Regent's Park, N.W.

March 12, 1899.

I hope you had a comfy journey, and that the service went off well.<sup>2</sup> Louisa came here after all, and is here now, which is very nice for me. Cousin Dyce and Molly and Capt. Boys<sup>3</sup> came to lunch to-day, and Mr. Francis Smith to tea; he says he hopes his god-daughter behaved well. The Interlopers<sup>4</sup> are very well and happy; they had a long conversation over wine and cigars after lunch to-day with Captain Rex about soldiers. Giles remarked that he was going to begin his military career by being Commander-in-Chief. He did not see the fun of the drudgery of training in the ranks.

<sup>1</sup> The *Life and Letters* of my husband.

<sup>2</sup> I had gone to the baptism of a godchild, the eldest daughter of the Rev. Walter Hobhouse, now Archdeacon of Gloucester. Mr. F. Smith was one of the godfathers, and the present Bishop of Truro the other.

<sup>3</sup> Now Colonel Boys, D.S.O.

<sup>4</sup> Norman and Giles were known as the Interlopers, as they came so long after the others.

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[On a visit to our old home.]

*Geanies,  
April 20, 1899.*

The weather here is magnificent so far; the sun is really quite hot! I never saw the place looking better. I don't think that even the proverbial hue of the Mediterranean can beat the Dornoch Firth at the present moment! The tops of the hills all round are covered with snow, which glistens between the blueness of the sky above and the sea beneath, and the latter is like glass. All this is in honour of my coming, for they have had terrible weather—blizzards—before I came.

After tea Marjory, Ken,<sup>1</sup> Marjorie Fraser<sup>2</sup> and I had a most glorious game of hide and seek all over the house; there is no one else staying here and hardly any servants, so we could go into all the rooms. We played till dinner-time—it was most exciting. Ken and Marjory are such ducks. I had a long conversation with Marjory after she had gone to bed on all sorts of subjects. She is just ten, and for the time being, that is my age too; so we get on capitally. Tell Gerry I took Marjory and Ken up the horse-chestnut; Ken was splendid at it.

[On a visit to Miss Louisa Trench.]

*The Vicarage, Kendal,  
October 1, 1899.*

I arrived here all right from Edinburgh after rather a tedious journey. The cousins were very kind to me.<sup>3</sup> We had the most tremendous storm of rain

<sup>1</sup> Son and daughter of T. M. Murray, Esq., W.S.

<sup>2</sup> Daughter of the Geanies shepherd, Mr. Fraser; he and his wife were loved by us all.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. and Mrs. T. M. Murray.



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and wind on Friday night, and it went on all through my journey.

Louisa is thinking quite seriously of Lady Margaret Hall, but I don't know whether it will really come off. It would be very jolly if it did. They have a queer old custom in the Church here, which has never died out, of having a long voluntary before the First Lesson which lasts about five minutes. The explanation of this is that it gave the Churchwardens time to rush out into the Pubs and drag the unwilling revellers in; another reason given is that the interval was an opportunity for allowing the Churchwardens themselves a little refreshment. The Church is a very fine one. Early English.

It is rather nice, isn't it—that the common great-great-grandfather of Cousin Tom, Cousin Carrie and us was the owner of Nigg. The property is not really passing out of the hands of the family. Cousin Tom drew up a nice little branch of our tree for my benefit.

I am going to a queer service this afternoon; it is harvest thanksgiving, which they treat like Christmas or Easter, and they are having a special afternoon service at which the Salvation Army is going to assist with its sweet strains!

*The Vicarage, Kendal,  
October 4, 1899.*

It is very jolly here. It poured with rain yesterday, and Louisa and I spent our time—in the kitchen—learning to cook. If I suddenly marry a penniless man now, I shall be able to give him a baked rice pudding for dinner—also damson jam for tea: those were the two chief things we saw being made; and I know how to roast a chicken and make bread-sauce too! So my first day of cooking has not been altogether spent in vain. Louisa and I also did Greek

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and Euclid respectively. Louisa's bugbear is Classics just as mine is Maths. I suppose she could take Pass Math. Mods. and escape Pass Classical Mods.? She wants to do the Degree course.

Here is a nice story I heard here : A new doctor came to Kendal from the south, who was unacquainted with the language of the country. He went to see an ailing child, and addressed it thus : "Now, my dear, open your mouth and put out your tongue." No response or movement. "Now, my dear, did you hear me—I want you to open your mouth and put out your tongue, that I may be able to see what is the matter with you." Still dumbness and stolid indifference. "The child must be a fool or daft," said the doctor to the mother who was standing by. "Daft yersel," she replied—then to the child : "Noo hinny, whappen-t' gob,—an pit oot-t' lolly"—and this at once had the desired effect.

War is looking very near. Did you see Rudyard Kipling in *The Times*? Don't you think it rather fine?

[Written while on a visit in Yorkshire.]

October 15, 1898.

Yesterday we went over to Whitby and explored the town thoroughly; it was jolly to see it again. We saw the Abbey, and went into that dreadful parish church; do you remember it? And we also saw the new Memorial Cross put up to Cædmon. It is not bad and will improve with age. We went into one of the curiosity shops and I bought some coins for Jack. We also went into as many churches as we could, and explored them. One we went into (we were surprised afterwards that it was open, but a woman was cleaning it, which perhaps accounts

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for it) and we stared round at the whitewash. Miss — said: "Do look at the East End," and for some time we looked about for it without being able to discover it! We then saw a microscopic Table, covered with what looked like sack-cloth, something the same colour as the whitewashed wall behind, which accounted for our apparent blindness. We went into one little Church—St. Ninian's—which was delightful.

I think the French class will be very nice at the X.'s and we will hope they play hockey this winter—not a sort of game of their own invention.

Ethel went up to Oxford, October 1899, and her letters give a vivid description of those happy years.

*Lady Margaret Hall,  
October 15, 1899.*

I loathe writing in pencil, but there is no ink in my room, and I know not how to procure any. Well, I got here all right—having travelled down with unmistakable students though not L.M.H. I cycled from the station, and a maid met me at the door, enquired my name and informed me that I was in the old buildings, and then showed me up to my room. I met Miss Wordsworth on the stairs who was very sweet and kind (as she has been ever since—introducing me to a lot of girls, making me sit by her at meals, etc.). I certainly do score a great deal by my parents!—and then I began unpacking. My room is a large one looking on to the road; I think I shall be able to make it look very nice. Could you bring or send down a lot of my pictures (*not* photographs, except the boys!). It would be nice to have Albert Dürer and the Raphael by the window, also that noony little Vandyck (?) boy (or girl) on the other side of the window; and

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any spare pictures besides. There are countless nails left in the walls by my predecessor. I got to know another fresher pretty soon, and we went for a walk together—right down to Ch. Ch. I have seen Miss Sellar and arranged a good deal of my work. I am going to have Mr. Spurling<sup>1</sup> for some things.

Everybody is *very* nice and kind. Just back from St. Barnabas, which was very nice.

October 22, 1899.

Not very much has happened of late, barring the arrival of that lovely Botticelli, which I presume is from you! Thank you *so* much therefor.

I have been to Mr. Spurling twice now; he is very kind and nice; but there is a great deal to read up; I am most terribly rusty. My coach got a second in Mods. and a First in Greats. Her Viva at the latter lasted 70 minutes; she and Mr. Rashdall<sup>2</sup> argued about Free Will, and the other examiners listened and enjoyed themselves! Afterwards they said they had never heard such a Viva. It must be jolly to be like that. Now she has just married a don of Trinity—who got a First in Math. Mods. and a First in Greats; so they are well matched. She is so smart and pretty too; and very nice to do proses with. I went to the Cowley Fathers twice to-day. I like them so much. As we aren't allowed to bicycle on Sundays, I have ten miles walking to do altogether! It is very nice for a change, and through such a jolly part of Oxford. The Char under Magdalen Bridge is so pretty now.

Advent Sunday, December 3, 1899.

Many thanks for your letters; I don't know why, but it seemed as though I had not heard for a long

<sup>1</sup> The late Canon Spurling.

<sup>2</sup> Now Dean of Carlisle.

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time. Life is as jolly as ever here. I am so sorry to hear about your cold and knee : I hope they are both much better now. It will be jolly to see you on Thursday. Everybody is in a wild state of rush over the play. You see, Miss Wordsworth didn't even write it until after half-term ! Do you know Ruth Wordsworth ? She is such a nice person. She and I have just been to lunch with Miss Butler—a most entertaining person. She told such a number of good stories. This was one—one of her little nephews was driving with his family, and they happened to pass some pig-sties which were emitting the usual odour. The rest of the family of course held their handkerchiefs up to their faces and observed “Ugh !” and then they happened to glance at the boy who was lying back with his eyes shut apparently in a state of rapturous ecstasy. They asked him why, and he answered : “I feel just as if I were in Heaven. Whenever I smell that very, very nice smell, I always feel as if I was in Heaven !”

I shall have been three times to SS. Mary and John to-day—twelve miles ! It was like going out in the middle of the night this morning—pitch dark. The Scotts<sup>1</sup> were so kind to me ! I went to breakfast with them one morning, and he showed me his schools, which are quite marvellous—such pattern children. He has 700 of them.

Oh—I forgot, I went to breakfast at Balliol on Tuesday ; it was so very funny. There were—I think—six shy youths (Cousin Maia ought to be satisfied with the number of young men I meet nowadays ; the odd part is that I don't feel much more more educated after meeting them that I did before ; but perhaps

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. William and Mrs. Scott. Mr. Scott was for many years Vicar of St. Mary and St. John, Oxford.

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they are too young to count) and six shy young women. We all stood about in the drawing-room, no one introducing us at first, and the Master and Mrs. Caird making a little conversation to two of the people; so in desperation a timid boy turned to me and said something about the weather; whereupon Mrs. Caird walked severely forward and said—"Miss Romanes—Mr. Duncan," which covered him with confusion, imagining he had done something very wrong. There were no introductions apparently until breakfast, when everybody was solemnly made known to their neighbours. But it was very nice and there was something homely and familiar in the Scotchness of everything.

[My Cousin Marian was given to insisting that Ethel did not meet young men in sufficient numbers.]

*December 10, 1899.*

The little book is nice<sup>1</sup>—I didn't know it was coming out so soon; it was such a nice surprise. And I do like the Dedication so much—another surprise: thank you so much, dilectissima mater.

Your cold must be well by the time I get back. I am rather afraid I shan't be able to get away before Friday—that means getting home on Saturday—because Smalls goes on till Thursday at 4.30, and then there is packing. I think I won't begin packing until after the exam. is over. That horrid exam.—everybody says here that it is much worse than any subsequent exam. Did you know that Mr. Gladstone failed the first time he went in?

I am going to lunch with the Scotts again to-day. They are so kind to me. I went to Magdalen and the

<sup>1</sup> *Thoughts on the Gospels*. I had dedicated it to her.

## The Story of an English Sister

"Vagabonds"—it was great fun. The Magdalen giant was there—such an amusing man. He recited at the concert.

*February 8, 1900.*

It is very sad to hear you are not coming, but I will try to bear up. In any case, the Saturday would have been a disappointing day, as the Somerville match is fixed for then. Miss Sellar has come back and really looks most flourishing. Everybody is much delighted to see her. I am going out with Miss Wordsworth for a walk this afternoon and feel rather alarmed. It is such glorious weather here now and Oxford is beautiful; only it is almost too cold to be pleasant. Some of us went on the river the other day; we had to row very hard to keep ourselves warm, but it was lovely to look upon.

Mrs. — called on me the other day and has now asked me to dinner. I hadn't the least idea who she was, all the time she was calling: but didn't let on. Mr. Harcourt<sup>1</sup> also came to see me and delivered a good lecture on the war, comparing us to Persians and the Boers to Greeks (not that I agreed in the least, but it is not good form to interrupt or contradict a lecturer), and finished up with an apt quotation from Herodotus. I enjoyed it all very much and was thankful that you or Cousin Dyce, or indeed any one else, was not in the room, as I should most assuredly have disgraced myself for ever.

I see a good deal of Louisa—she comes and works here.

*Septuagesima, 1900.*

Oxford has been looking more gorgeous than I have ever seen it during the last week—very bright,

<sup>1</sup> Vernon Harcourt, Esq., F.R.S., of Christ Church, once Teacher in Chemistry.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

almost warm days, and a thin layer of snow, with a sort of golden haze over everything. There is a most beautiful moon to-night. St. Mary's and Magdalen with the-sunset on them to-night were magnificent.

We had Mr. Mackay<sup>1</sup> at the Society of the Annunciation, who was very nice.

*Quinquagesima Sunday, 1900.*

I saw our dear Uncle Phil to-day, which was very pleasant : how very cleverly he does talk, and amusingly. There were two young House-men at tea, too, who began by regarding him as a sort of wild beast : it was very edifying for them, I think to hear him talk and chaff as well as, or rather better than, most people. I also lunched with the Scotts, who were very kind.

*March 11, 1900.*

I went to the Scotts for breakfast this morning : they are very kind—then to the — to lunch : the change of atmosphere was most bewildering. Mr. — wanted to know what sort of thing a Mission is—a *propos* of Mr. —, whom he had happened to meet once. I told him what the Mission was, and he asked what Mr. — did with all the money : Mrs. — said vaguely that she supposed he wanted it for his own keep ! Mr. —, asked what was meant by the term “good works.” It was so odd to come straight to them from the Scotts.

I went to tea with Mrs. Butler yesterday. One of their girls is going in for Smalls too, so we are going to protect each other. We are having very lovely weather : the parks are so pretty.

I am going to a birthday party now—a double one, of two girls whose difference in age is an hour and a half !

<sup>1</sup> Now Vicar of All Saints', Margaret Street.



# The Story of an English Sister

*March 18, 1900.*

It is quite shocking that I haven't written since last Sunday: but, as you can fancy, I have been rather busy lately. One rather exciting thing has happened—viz. that it is pretty well decided (if you like it) that I am going in for Honour Mods.! At least Miss Rogers<sup>1</sup> and I have been having a talk. I should certainly much prefer it to history. I don't much want to do Theology at once, as they seem not to like the idea: it would be much pleasanter to do what they like; and Mods. is a very nice thing. Besides I see in a sort of way that they mean about it. I have been working up pretty hard lately for Smalls—doing Stock sums with Louise, who is so kind about helping me: she either comes here or I go there every day between tea and dinner. Smalls is horrid, though.

*March 24, 1900.*

Those horrid Smalls are over at last. I think I am quite safe in all the papers except the Prose, which I am very much afraid of. I had six wrong things in it—not exactly howlers, but still not good Latin; and they only allow two real howlers; so I don't know what will happen. Miss Sellar is comforting. I showed it to her. I got all my sums right—only think! And 7/9 of my Euclid! The prose was decidedly catchy.<sup>2</sup>

*May 6, 1900.*

. . . I give swimming lessons twice a week now to people who are debarred from the river from not having learnt.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Rogers is so well known to all Oxford people that it seems needless to explain that she is a well-known and brilliant tutor.

<sup>2</sup> She passed the dreaded Smalls.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

This term is so nice. I am going a picnicking on Saturday; and I have been two or three times on the river: it is very difficult to work properly, but Miss Rogers keeps one up to the mark.

*May 17, 1900.*

We have been having horrid cold winds, but to-day has been simply glorious; I have been reading in a boat on the river with three other people. Yes, I heard the Bishop of Zanzibar<sup>1</sup> speak last term; he came here. Everybody is much excited by a rumour that Mafeking is relieved: we do so want to have it confirmed. The Bach Choir is so jolly now—Brahm's Requiem; and we are going to illustrate Parry's lecture with such queer old music—one is a 18th Century Alleluia and there is a lovely Palestrina Benedictus.

*May 26, 1900.*

We had a lovely Ascension Day (I am so glad you had too). We—Evie Young and I—went to Cowley early and at 11; then we took food for lunch and tea on the river, starting about 1.30. We had settled beforehand that even if it poured we would go; and we did have one tremendous shower in the middle of lunch, and the food and cushions and the *Pilot* got soaked, but we didn't mind. It cleared up later to a certain extent, and we went a long, long way. There wasn't a single other boat. The Cherwell was so beautiful; we went further than I had ever been before. We got back in time for early dinner and then went to Cowley for 8 p.m. Evensong. It was a very nice day; we felt vastly superior to the other people.

I went to the Mathesons<sup>2</sup> to dinner where the

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Hine.

<sup>2</sup> A. Matheson, Esq., Fellow of New College.

## The Story of an English Sister

Beechings<sup>1</sup> were; it was very nice to see them. The Burges<sup>2</sup> were there too, but I am not at all clear who the other people were. Mrs. Brocklebank asked me to dinner at the Randolph on Thursday, but I didn't go, as anyhow we aren't supposed to go out more than once a week. I had four invitations to dinner altogether last week! Lady Burdon Sanderson clashed with the Mathesons.

I went to the Moberly's<sup>3</sup> to tea the other day: George is a very beautiful youth.

May 30, 1900.

I went to lunch with the Hawkins'<sup>4</sup> to-day; how nice they are. Afterwards Miss Wordsworth and I went for a "stroll" (as she calls it, pronouncing it as though it rhymed with "doll")—she is so very delightful to have to oneself, and keeps one in yells of laughter. There isn't much to tell you about. I go a great deal on the river, especially as I am "qualified" now—*i. e.* may be in charge of boat parties who can't manage boats; and this entails going on the river a good deal, as people are constantly asking one to take them out.

October 21, 1900.

. . . There was a tremendous crowd of all kinds of people in the streets for Sir H. Acland's funeral: he must have been very much liked by poor people; there were throngs of them in Broad St. and Holywell, so that I had to walk my bicycle. Thank you very

<sup>1</sup> Now Dean of Norwich.

<sup>2</sup> The present Bishop of Southwark.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Robert Moberly, Canon of Christ Church. George was then about ten.

<sup>4</sup> Sir John and Lady Hawkins. Sir John's *Horæ Synopticæ* and other writings are well known.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

much for the books: it was very nice to see the Latin Dictionary again.

I had a nice long talk with Miss Wordsworth one evening: she was very nice. We talked about modern girls: her views are very different from Miss ——'s!

October 25, 1900.

. . . There is not much to tell you of, as one day is much like another. The Sandersons<sup>1</sup> asked me to dine with them, and I wish I could have gone, for the mere pleasure of beholding him! But of course it was for next Saturday; last time they asked me it was a Rogation Day. The Schäfers<sup>2</sup> are going to be there. One of the freshers asked me to tell her about the Society of the Annunciation, so I began, but when I said "Mr. Gore"—she said "O-h-h, then I am *afraid* . . . you see Father doesn't *approve* of Canon Gore!" I nearly said, "Poor Father" or "Poor Canon Gore," but refrained.

November 5, 1900.

Isn't it sad about Dr. Bright?<sup>3</sup> he was prayed for in St. Barnabas' yesterday. Mr. Mackay preached such a nice sermon there.

November 18, 1900.

Not very much has come to pass here since I came back. I went to lunch with the Warners<sup>4</sup> to-day,

<sup>1</sup> Sir John Burdon Sanderson, F.R.S., etc., was a most beautiful person in mind and body. He and Lady Sanderson were very dear friends all through my married life and after.

<sup>2</sup> Professor E. A. Schäfer.

<sup>3</sup> Dr. Bright, the well-known Professor of Ecclesiastical History, and Canon of Christ Church. Ethel and I loved such lectures as he had allowed us to hear, and his sermons and his lovely hymns.

<sup>4</sup> The Rev. W. Warner was Tutor and Senior Student of Christ Church.

## The Story of an English Sister

and he showed me a lot of 1870 Oberammergau photographs, which were very interesting, as one could see how much it has all developed.

Mrs. Paget has a bad chill, so the dinner party tomorrow has been put off. I hear Dr. Bright was in Cathedral this morning and is talking of lecturing again! The Warners say he walks just as usual.

I went to St. Barnabas' to-day. Cowley *is* such a long way off, and it gets longer and longer towards the end of the term. We had Mr. Mackay, who was very nice.

*November 22, 1900.*

How terrible this is about Mrs. Paget.<sup>1</sup> I am going down this morning to look at the bulletin. People were thinking very badly of it last night.

We had the most splendid address last night at the S.A. Social from the C.O.S man, Mr. Loch. It was a very nice meeting except for Mrs. Thompson's<sup>2</sup> not being there.

P.S.—I don't know whether there is anybody besides me who can keep you up as to how Mrs. Paget gets on? Would you like me to send you the bulletins as often as I can?

[After Mrs. Paget's death.]

*November 25, 1900.*

It is so terrible that one can scarcely realise that it is really true: she always seemed so full of vigour; and she was looking so beautiful and well the last time I saw her—at Birmingham.<sup>3</sup> And it has come

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Paget had been taken ill very suddenly. She was an irreparable loss to all who loved her.

<sup>2</sup> Hon. Secretary of the Society of the Annunciation, and sister-in-law of Mrs. Paget.

<sup>3</sup> At the Musical Festival.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

with such ghastly suddenness. I can't help feeling glad to think that one of the very last things she did was to send me her love (in a letter written by Miss Church yesterday week to put off the dinner). You are not coming to-morrow? I am thinking of going to 8 o'clock Cathedral to-morrow morning: I suppose it is all right for anybody to go and to the funeral too.

I didn't hear the Bishop of Rochester: I should like to have. I went to St. Barnabas and heard Mr. Mackay, who orders one about rather à la Mr. Jervois: very nice and clear and definite. One thing he said was the duty of everybody—to get the *Christian's Handy Book of Prayer*!

It is nice to think that the vac. is getting so near.

[Before her twenty-first birthday.]

January 27, 1901.

It is very jolly that, as it happens, it will be most convenient for me to stay over Monday when I come home, because I have no lecture that day or coaching, and I can easily miss one Tuesday morning one, though I must be back by 12. And I have nothing on Saturday either, so I can come down in the morning! But I shall have to stay in a few afternoons before hand to make up the work!

We are going to be very lucky at St. Barnabas—Mr. Mackay for the next 3 Sundays—then Mr. Stuckey Coles, and Uncle Phil on Wednesdays in Lent. There is going to be a Requiem Mass<sup>1</sup> next Saturday and Canon Knox Little is going to preach.

Mrs. Humphry Ward gave a lecture here yesterday on the "Peasant Novel," but I am afraid I didn't

<sup>1</sup> For the Queen.

## The Story of an English Sister

go. I hear she likes the *Window in Thrums*, which is satisfactory, but she talked chiefly about Italian and Spanish novels, which no one had ever read or (shall I whisper it ?) heard of.

[About the Queen's funeral.]

February 8, 1901.

I wonder whether you saw anything yesterday. Some of our people went up and were very lucky, though they only stood in the street. One girl who lives in the Isle of Wight went home and saw absolutely everything. I went to St. Barnabas for the Requiem Mass. It was simply packed; they had to bring a great many more chairs in. Canon Knox Little preached very eloquently. I heard that they literally turned away hundreds from the Cathedral. It was an extraordinary day. What did St. Mary Magdalene's do? Last Sunday evening too, though there was nothing on exactly, I never saw such a pack of people at Christ Church when we got in. All the space below the organ was crowded with people, so we thought there was no chance of a seat; but the dear Verger spied me and told Francis,<sup>1</sup> who at the last moment led my comrade and me up the middle aisle (as the side aisle was crowded with people standing) and so round to one of the North Transept seats. I never saw anything like it.

I see Mrs. Creighton is going to write the Bishop's *Life*. I do wonder who the next Bishop of London will be.

February 19, 1901 was my Ethel's twenty-first birthday, and we kept it as joyously as we could.

<sup>1</sup> The Senior Verger.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

She had many presents and letters. We concluded our various enjoyments with *Twelfth Night* at the Haymarket. She writes on her return—

*February 21, 1901.*

I caught that train quite easily with five minutes to spare, despite John's<sup>1</sup> gloomy forebodings. The cabman was delighted with the half-crown. I got an empty carriage all the way down and studied the *Electra* hard. When I arrived at the door of my room I found a real triumphal arch—a lot of flags stuck on the door, and two large notices—"Welcome, Father Fritz" (one of my nicknames here) and "Salve Censor" (another of my nicknames); and inside, flags were hung up all over the room, and there were a lot of flowers and little books and things from people in the Hall. Wasn't it nice of them? Also there were a lot of sham letters—from the King, the German Emperor, and the Archbishop of Canterbury (I am always being chaffed for knowing people). It was such fun. In the evening we had a birthday party, and twelve people came. We ate birthday cake and drank cocoa. I felt most dissipated and it was quite difficult to do any work afterwards.

Auntie has sent me a delightful long chain. I can wear it with a watch or not as I like. It is a very handsome, heavy one. The Bishop of Stepney wrote me such a nice letter: it came this morning. I have had the most lovely birthday altogether. It was so jolly—those days at home. I don't know how to say Thank-you enough!

We beat Somerville, 2-0, to-day after a hard game.

<sup>1</sup> Our butler, commonly known as "the Faithful John," a title borrowed from a fairy tale.



## The Story of an English Sister

A ball rose, you will be glad to hear, and hit me in the face; but not badly—only a scratch on the nose.<sup>1</sup>

Cousin Carrie has sent me such a sweet little clock : and Auntie Anne has just written to say she is sending a “jool ” of some kind.

*April, 1901*

Isn't it lovely about our Bishop.<sup>2</sup> Aren't all our people rejoicing? The Bach Choir is the next excitement : the Brahms is really going very well : it is to be in the Town Hall on Thursday.

The L.M.H. people nearly flayed me because I let out that I had warned you against being too long that evening :<sup>3</sup> they want you to come back and tell the rest of the funny stories : they wanted me to stop you after the Council !

*April 29, 1901.*

I think, if you don't mind very much that I have almost decided to chuck Mods. and do Theology : Miss Wordsworth and Miss Pearson have both got it out of me that I like it much better than Mods., and the latter is very keen that I should do it. I should think it was almost better to do a thing one can get on at best. I don't think Mods. is quite my line, though of course I like parts of it very much, and am very glad to have had this year of it. But I should rejoice much more in the other.

Joachim is coming on Wednesday in quartets. We are to have one of Mozart, one of Haydn, and one of Beethoven—scrumptious !!

<sup>1</sup> “Fritz ” knew that in the depths of my heart I hated hockey, and always dreaded that a ball would hit her in the face.

<sup>2</sup> The Bishop of Stepney (Dr. Winnington-Ingram) had been appointed to the See of London.

<sup>3</sup> A lecture I gave, I think on Port Royal.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

*May 22, 1901.*

This is only to tell you what you must know already—how much I am thinking of you now, and how I am beginning to understand more and more what your wanting must be; I shall be remembering you to-morrow at 7. I went to Holywell <sup>1</sup> yesterday—the flowers are beautiful.

I will come on Saturday, but am not quite sure what time I can get off. They pile on a good deal of work this term.

Two others and I rowed all the way up the Cherwell as far as Islip—7 miles—to-day, and back. We took tea with us. It only took us an hour and a half to get there: we had a long rest on the banks, and then took an hour and twenty minutes to get back. The river gets prettier and prettier as you go on; and the boats don't get so far—so that one doesn't see a single creature, but is quite in the wilds.

I went to see the Sandersons yesterday; they were very nice, and hoped they would see you when you come to Oxford.

*Ascension Day, May 8, 1902.*

Isn't it horribly cold—we couldn't carry out our little plans for to-day; I do wish it would get finer. I took a whole holiday which was rather nice. Mr. Brightman <sup>2</sup> preached to us at St. Barnabas'.

I went last night to the social evening of the S.A. Mrs. Ady lectured to us about Watts. She had some beautiful photographs of most of his important pictures, and it was altogether rather nice. She appears to know him very well, and so told us some of his own interpretations of his pictures.

<sup>1</sup> My husband was buried at Holywell.

<sup>2</sup> Fellow of Magdalen. Well known for his liturgical and theological work.

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I am so glad Mr. Alington <sup>1</sup> thinks Jack improved; I am sure a lot of individual looking after is what his work really wants, and that if he could get that kind of thing a year before Smalls he would be quite safe.

*June 8, 1902.*

I see Lady Northampton is gone—it must be good, but poor Lord Northampton and the little ones!

It is still horrid and cold and wet here. I nearly took Norman out yesterday for his exeat,<sup>2</sup> but it was such a horrid day, I put it off at the last minute till next Saturday. Poor Norman—he was so much disappointed—two large tears trickled slowly down. But I think it was really better. I only hope it will be fine next time. I went to dinner with the Warrens last night—very nice. Mr. Clement Webb was the next youngest to me and took me in. The Merrys<sup>3</sup> and the Thompsons<sup>4</sup> were there.

I went to the Fourth of June. It was rather a wet day, which spoilt it. Mr. Jervois was there looking rather tired. Winnie Knox and I went together; we had such a fuss before going about chaperons. I said an old clergyman would be there (shade of Mr. Jervois!) and it was thought that might do. But we got Mrs. Laffan to travel down with us. I should have thought one's brother would have been chaperon enough. We lunched at the Bowlbys'. Miss Furse and Ralph<sup>5</sup> were there. Ralph is in Jack's house now. We got into Speeches luckily as

<sup>1</sup> The present Head Master of Eton; then an Assistant Master.

<sup>2</sup> Norman was at Summerfields, the famous preparatory school.

<sup>3</sup> The Rector of Lincoln.

<sup>4</sup> The Rev. H. Thompson, Vicar of St. Mary's.

<sup>5</sup> Major Furse and Jack were together in France in the Great War.

## Early Youth and Lady Margaret Hall

Winnie's brother had tickets. He said a speech out of Livy. I saw Miss Ward just for a minute.

*October 23, 1902.*

Being Senior Student is a great bore in some ways: such lots of extra things to do, and a sort of responsibility for everything going right.

Mr. Scott's new house is going to be blessed soon by the Bishop of Oxford. I am going to see that. I have quite given up Sunday School, as I have such an enormous pile of work—12 lectures a week and a coaching! I go to *such* interesting lectures on Butler, by Mr. Wright Henderson at Wadham—he says he knows you. He asked me first if I was who I am, and appeared interested to hear I was! Such a nice man. We go to Dr. Sanday too—the old dear—he says such nice kind things about all the horrid Germans whom he really must hate so.

I have promised to read a paper at a C. S. U. Meeting! Isn't it dreadful; I am sure I can't. It's to be a résumé of part of Rowntree's book about York, and there are lots of horrid statistics which I can't fathom.

*November 2, 1902.*

It will be jolly to see you in a fortnight. Couldn't you come on the 14th—we are going to have a meeting that evening at L.M.H. at which Mother Cécile<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Furse<sup>2</sup> are going to speak—aren't we lucky? I have got to try to get the room full of students—from other Halls as well as our own.

I had a lovely time yesterday tête-à-tête, at tea

<sup>1</sup> Mother Cécile, who under Bishop Webb had founded the Community of the Resurrection in South Africa. She was a most wonderful educationalist.

<sup>2</sup> Now Bishop of Pretoria.

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with the Bishop of Stepney. Ernest never turned up; I can't think why, as I reminded him the day before: however I enjoyed having him to myself very much. I got there rather early—before he did, and while I was waiting Mr. Alington suddenly burst in, but he didn't recognise me and rushed out again at once. I heard afterwards from the Bishop that he shares the same rooms with him.<sup>1</sup> Afterwards the Bishop walked nearly all the way to Cowley Fathers with me, as he was going to see somebody in Iffley Road. Then I went to the Cowley Fathers and they had *my* hymn there.<sup>2</sup>

I am sorry to be two days late in writing, but I felt so lazy on Sunday after the play, which was very toilsome, and yesterday there was the usual Monday rush. The play was by Miss Wordsworth—very amusing, and I was stage manager. It was great fun. Lots of students from other Halls came, and it was quite a success, and Miss Wordsworth seemed very much pleased with the way we had done it, which was a great relief. It is rather a frightening thing to do a play in the presence of the distinguished author thereof. But last week was a great rush, and it is a comfort to have it over.

I have just seen about Mr. Gore<sup>3</sup>—what a snub for the Prots. I wonder when the Consecration will be now. . . . I must go to Dr. Driver.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At All Souls'.

<sup>2</sup> "Jerusalem, my Happy Home," in the unmutilated version.

<sup>3</sup> Appointed Bishop of Worcester. His confirmation had been opposed by an insignificant group of noisy malcontents.

<sup>4</sup> The eminent Professor of Hebrew. Ethel went to his lectures on the Pentateuch.





*From a photograph by Alice Hughes]*

ETHEL GEORGINA ROMANES  
(1903)

## CHAPTER III

### DAYS AT HOME (1903-1906)

WE (Fritz and I) had a great joy and privilege one Easter Vacation; we were asked by the beloved and holy Bishop King to pay him a visit in the Old Palace at Lincoln. We went on to him from Castle Ashby, where we had been with Lord and Lady Northampton, old friends of George's and mine, but I have spoken of them in the *Life*. She, "dear Maisie," as she was known to her friends, was indeed a beautiful soul inspiring one to fresh courage as one saw her bearing her terrible illness so calmly, with such unselfish courage and ever-growing sweetness, with very little outward help. She died in 1902 and left many who mourn her still.

In 1903 the first shadow since my husband's death fell on us. One lovely summer's day Ernest appeared at Pitcalzean from Oxford, where he had been in camp with the University Volunteers, as they were called at that remote period. He had written to me that he had a bad cold and was coming home. He seemed very ill and I hurried him to bed and sent for the doctor. He had a sharp attack of pleurisy; but was the best of patients, and no forebodings troubled me when he seemed to be quickly recovering. Nannie and I nursed him and I read to him for many hours each day. One day as I was sitting by him a telegram was brought in, with this laconic message: "Fritz—first." We had been expecting news from Ethel, who had been kept in Oxford



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for what was to her the most terrible bit of her Schools, the *Viva Voce*.

[I suppose every one knows that University Examinations at Oxford are called "Schools." "I'm in the Schools next week," a man or woman will say, meaning they are to undergo a University examination.]

My journal records that Ernest and I were wild with joy. He threw pillows into the air, shouting and singing, until I became really frightened and implored him to lie down and not send his temperature up. I find I wrote: "Dear clever little girl! So persuaded was she that she had only got a third class, that she would not go and look at the list of names herself, but sent a friend to look, and refused to believe it could be true when her friend and her tutor came to tell her. It is absolute unclouded joy, and dear Ernest is so sweet and unselfish, so madly delighted." Indeed this was so—Ernest's own career was cut short at Oxford by this illness. It was decided that he had better not return to Oxford, where he was reading for the Honour School of Science; but it was always a characteristic of my dear eldest boy that he cared much more for other people's success and pleasure than for his own, and he was always inordinately proud of such literary success as I obtained and of his sister's powers.

Nothing seemed to cloud that summer. We had many friends—Mr. Jervois and Father Waggett among them. I find I wrote: "P.N.W. is here so thoroughly himself, working away at what he calls 'Typical Developments,' a title taken from *Happy Thoughts*." I remember Father Waggett, to whom I had given a small sitting-room for his own use, insisting that "Fritz" should go in at intervals during the morning and compel him to work if he were not

## Days at Home

doing so. He was usually discovered reading *Alice in Wonderland* or *Alice through the Looking Glass*, but nevertheless his work prospered. Fritz gave a lecture occasionally, as I did, to the Cromarty Literary Society; and I well remember after one of these she and I were nearly drowned crossing from Cromarty to Dunskaith. The Cromarty Firth is extraordinarily tempestuous, and as we were trying to leave the harbour, the boat was all but swamped, to the horror of the future Mrs. Ernest Romanes, who was seeing us off. We had to go a long way out of our course when we did set sail, and I don't think I was ever so frightened. Fritz was used to these experiences. One winter she, Ernest (who as the fisher-people said was "awfu' canny" in a boat), and Gerald left Cromarty in a storm which had prevented the usual ferry-boat from crossing. They crossed in eight minutes, the usual time being anything from twenty minutes to an hour and a half, and the scanty population on the Dunskaith side, who had known them all from babyhood, turned out to meet them and fell on their necks in thankfulness. That none of us have yet been drowned in the Cromarty ferry is to me a matter of wonder.

At the end of 1903 Ernest became engaged to Miss Scott, known to us since then as Alex, her second name being Alexandra. She had renewed her childhood's acquaintance and no longer considered the boys and Fritz as "not nice children." In fact we laughed at her, and said she had married the whole family in general, and took Ernest as he was the most handy. Those days were very happy, but I found myself haunted by forebodings—of what I could not tell—certainly not of the sorrows which were to come so soon.

## The Story of an English Sister

But everything seemed sunny then. Ernest had been invited by Mr. Mackay, then of the Pusey House and now Vicar of All Saints, Margaret Street, to join him in a tour to Egypt and the Holy Land, and it was thought that this would be excellent from the point of health. So in spite of his engagement he went on the tour, to which our dear friend has so often alluded in his sermons. No one can better describe the scenery of the Holy Land than he. With Ernest went also Mr. Carpenter Garnier and Mr. Edmund Brocklebank,<sup>1</sup> both of them now well-known Priests.

It was about this time that dear Fritz began to realise that most probably God was calling her to the Religious Life. It was not easy for her to obey that call. She had many gifts, her life was happy, she had many friends, and five brothers who all adored her, and there was always the thought that she might be wrong to leave me—though I did nothing and said nothing to hold her back, for which I am indeed thankful.

Our pair of lovers gave us unceasing pleasure. They were so good that we usually called them the "Devout Lovers."

They were married on January 31, 1905, and went to India for their wedding tour. Ethel and I had one of our rare runs abroad. We went to the Riviera for a fortnight in search of sunshine. We took a little house in Oxford for June and July and enjoyed ourselves much.

[To me: on a visit to the Community, which she joined in 1908. She had been in Retreat there several times.]

<sup>1</sup> Youngest son of my friends, Mr. and Mrs. T. Brocklebank, Watlingbury Place, Kent.

## Days at Home

*May 28, 1905.*

I've got here all right. It is rather a frightening place when you arrive alone, but they are very kind. I am glad I waited till Sister — came back, as she is the only one I really know. There are three or four other visitors here too. It will be awful to come here not as a visitor. It all looks very pretty. They say the flowers were beautiful a few weeks ago. We have just had Vespers—lost my way hopelessly of course in the “Day Hours.” Now there is nothing till Evensong at 7—supper at 8.30. The visitors sit at a separate table for meals, but nobody talks then. I hope it will be fine, as it will be jolly to explore the countryside if it is permissible! The Mother is away resting, and so are a good many Sisters—the House is rather empty. I am in the Home, not the Guest-house, which is a comfort, and oddly enough in a room I had once before.

*May 28, 1905.*

I feel very happy and at home here. They are all so very kind. They are such human people, much more so than lots of Communities, I should think. We had a beautiful sung Mass this morning at 7.30—etc. It was as much like Cowley as a lot of women's voices could make it.

There are to be four Solemn Baptisms this afternoon. I hear it is a beautiful sight.

I don't think I *do* want to go to Palestine after all,<sup>1</sup> if you will forgive my changeableness. I would rather stay with you? (How pleased Miss — would be.) Besides we might see or hear of a little house

<sup>1</sup> I had suggested that she should go on a tour to the Holy Land.

## The Story of an English Sister

that would exactly do, and it would be a great pity not to snap it up.<sup>1</sup>

This place makes me feel so well—my face is like a lobster's. I have had some lovely country walks. I hope you are resting too, for a change. You will have to at Oxford; I shall see to it!

11 *Bardwell Road, Oxford,*  
*July 20, 1905.*

MY DEAREST ALEX,

Very many thanks for two charming letters. Winnie Knox has just been up for her viva (history) and was staying with us for a night; the examiners said such nice things to her, how brilliant her papers had been, how much she had amused them, etc.; so I think she is sure to have a first. One of the examiners said to her—"You've been abroad I suppose?" (à propos of some place, Ravenna, I think described in one of W.'s papers). So W. said No, she had never been out of England. "Then how does she know so much?" said the examiner, turning to one of the other examiners. That sort of viva must be rather jolly! Mother and I have been attending some lectures, which are held every year for the clergy; we were allowed tickets, and felt so shy, the only women. Most of the clergy positively glared at us! However we knew some of them. Among others, before the lecture (by Dr. Illingworth—beautiful it was!) began, the Bishop of Brechin whom Mother, Ernest and I had met at Inverness that Consecration time,<sup>2</sup> came up, sat down beside us, after shaking hands, and said: "I met you at Inverness, I think." I saw his apron and twigged at once who he was, but Mother didn't.

<sup>1</sup> We were house-hunting.

<sup>2</sup> The Consecration of the present Bishop of Moray and Ross.

## Days at Home

"Oh yes, how do you do," said Mother a little vaguely. After a few general remarks Mother enquired sweetly: "And where are you working now?" "Brechin," said the Bishop meekly. Tableau! "Oh, of course, my lord, how *stupid* of me! For a moment I couldn't quite remember whether Brechin was your diocese or Aberdeen." . . . Collapse, as she realises that this doesn't make it a bit better, and doesn't sound even convincing. However the Bishop was most forgiving and came to lunch the next day.

Must end up. Love to E. and thanks for his letter *re* Palestine; but I'm not going after all.

Heaps of love from—

Fritz.

Ethel had preceded me to Scotland, and she wrote—

*Pitcalzean,  
July 26, 1905.*

I had a very pleasant journey north; Uncle Phil<sup>1</sup> sent me some more proofs just before I started, and they helped to shorten the night! I had no one in the carriage as far as Perth, and after that some nice people, with a charming poodle called Snooks. "Jock"<sup>2</sup> was with me all the time.

This is such a quaint household: <sup>3</sup> the Irish cook, very Irish (in fact it's rather like living in Ireland à la Irish R.M.), Maggie Page,<sup>4</sup> Auntie and Jack, who does every conceivable thing, from ordering the meals upwards.

The boys' come by the mail to-morrow. Jack is

<sup>1</sup> Father Waggett often gave Ethel proofs to correct.

<sup>2</sup> A beloved Aberdeen terrier.

<sup>3</sup> We were living in a picnic fashion, as the Ernests were in India on their wedding tour.

<sup>4</sup> Maggie Page was a peculiarly inefficient maid of my sister's.

## The Story of an English Sister

really rather a unique character—so very practical and thoughtful and kind—everybody seems to lean on him.

In August of 1905 came the great sorrow of Mr. Jervois's death. Ethel had gone up to Ross-shire, and I was staying at Cloan with Miss Haldane when I got Ethel's telegram; we met and went back to London.

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

*Pitcalzean,  
Sunday, F. of the Transfiguration,  
August 6, 1905.*

Oh, my darling Alex, how will you bear it—how are any of us going to bear it? I don't know how much you heard by the last mail—how the Vicar found by an X-ray picture that he had what he had always feared—stone; and how he was told he ought to be operated on at once. I don't know yet what day he knew this, but last Sunday, the 30th, he gave out himself to the congregation as the special intercession. The same day he wrote to me (not knowing where Mother was, who was paying visits) a long letter all about it. I got this on Tuesday morning. That morning he celebrated; Dyce was there. The next morning I got a p.c. from him saying the operation was to be that day—Wednesday the 2nd—at 9.10 a.m. His letter had been a simple statement of fact and did not show whether he was afraid or not of what might happen. He said he would probably be in bed for a month, and that whether he came to Pit or not afterwards would, of course, depend on the doctors. Well we waited, Jack and I, all that morning for news. A telegram from Mr. Lawson came with the post, 3.30, saying "Operation well over, stone found, pulse good."

## Days at Home

A second wire from Mr. Hudson at about 6 said very much the same. How we rejoiced, thinking this meant he would have no more pain and be quite well again. The next day, Thursday the 3rd, another wire from Mr. Lawson saying "Excellent night, no pain, no need for further anxiety." Also a very happy letter from Dyce. I got a p.c. from Mr. Hudson on Friday saying "Going on excellently," and another on Saturday, yesterday, the 5th, to the same effect. The boys arrived from school on Saturday. At 6.30 p.m. on Friday they had called to enquire at the Home and had been told the Vicar was to have visitors on Monday. This was our latest news. At 5.30 p.m. yesterday we got two telegrams together. When I heard there was a wire I thought it was the one I was expecting about W. Knox's Schools—never dreaming it was one about the Vicar—we had left them off since Thursday. One was—"Bad collapse, state most serious, please tell your mother"; the other—"Vicar passed away at 3.15."

That is the history as far as I know it. I wired on to Mother at the Haldanes';<sup>1</sup> you can imagine a little the rest of that day. I got a wire from Mother this morning saying she was going to London tomorrow (Monday) night and would I like to come. Of course I've wired back Yes. Poor Mother—staying away when this news arrived. She had left the Brocklebanks on Friday feeling quite happy. They had been *most* kind—Edmund was so sweet—and they had a Mass for the Vicar on Wednesday morning. The Vicar evidently found out after he wrote to me where Mother was, for he wrote to her too, I am thankful to say. We had our Mass for him on Thursday morning feeling comparatively easy.

<sup>1</sup> The present Viscount Haldane.



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To-morrow, then, I go south and shall probably meet Mother at Perth. I haven't heard from her at all yet, because of Sunday coming in the way—have just had this wire, that's all.

Oh, Alex and Ernest, what shall we do without the Vicar? It is so difficult to think as yet of the bright good side—we can only think of ourselves, not of his peace. I like to think of Father (only Alex didn't know *him*) coming to meet him and saying—"Thank you for taking care of them and helping to make them good." We had rather a nice Evensong just now with the Office for All Souls afterwards; and "Jerusalem the golden" and "Blest are the pure in heart," which last the Vicar specially liked: and we sang the Magnificat and Nunc Dimittis. Mrs. Scott<sup>1</sup> has sent such a sweet note across. I hope we shall be in time on Tuesday morning to see his face again. I will tell you. Won't end up now properly.—F.

After this follows a long and interesting description of the funeral which I omit.

Our dear Cousin Marian died on August 19, and Ethel writes—

*Pit.*  
*Feast of St. Bartholomew, 1905.*

DEAREST A. AND E.,

We are all very sad as you can imagine—Cousin Maia gone too; Paradise is getting very full. Father was so fond of her; we are so thankful we had her with us for nearly a fortnight in July at Oxford. We all went out on the river once or twice.

We are all having a delightfully quiet time—not

<sup>1</sup> Of Cromarty.

## Days at Home

bothered by any one. Mr. S. is perhaps coming for September—at least we have asked him.

How nice to think the time is getting near for your coming back. We shall have the flat all ready for you to pop into when you arrive in London.

*Pit.*

*August 31, 1905.*

MY DEAREST ALEX AND ERNEST—

August of 1905<sup>1</sup> seems to be a fatal month—it is good to get to its last day. Poor old Jockun<sup>2</sup> died early this morning. I am so sorry for E. as I know he was as much a friend as a servant to him. Jack went late last night to see him, and he seems to have known he was dying, and said he did wish he could have seen the bear-skin.<sup>3</sup> This is a dreadful, dreadful summer.

We are so sad this week to think of you, as you must be getting those awful letters. I had you so much in my head on the 29th that I could not help thinking that that was the day on which you heard. I wonder if it was. It was odd to get your mail written on August 5th, saying you would be cross if Mr. Jervois was not in London in October. Did Mother tell you how we went to Inverness the other day and saw Mr. Giraud at Mr. Mackintosh's—we felt quite in a S.M.M. circle—both Mr. Mackintosh and Mr. Giraud loving the Vicar so much? Mr. Giraud was at St. Matthew's those twelve years that Mr. Jervois was and was one of his chief friends. It was so curious to meet him like this after hearing so much about him and after having seen him on August 10th. He is a dear and is coming out here—we hope for next Sunday. We are

<sup>1</sup> As was 1914.

<sup>2</sup> John Munro, gamekeeper.

<sup>3</sup> Ernest had shot a bear.

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trying to get Mr. Staffurth for September and Mr. Bowlby<sup>1</sup> may be coming too for next Sunday—so we don't know whether we shall be Padre-less or have three Padres.

How lovely it will be when you come home—I am sure you are longing to be back—it must be horrid to be far away just now. There must be such lots of things which perhaps we have forgotten to tell you. And it must be horrid to be among strangers who can't understand. It is such a relief to be all thinking the same as we do, and to talk to one another. We often laugh over the old jokes and say "Do you remember so and so Mr. Jervois used to do or say," or we quote something he said; or we say "Mr. Jervois would not at all approve of that" if Mother says something Anglican. All that is a relief somehow. But it must be much harder for you by yourselves. I am so glad you are coming home soon.

Our future Vicar, Mr. Giraud, stayed with us at Pitcalzean; Fritz and I had already set our hearts on his being appointed to St. Mary Magdalene. He was not yet appointed and rather discouraged the idea. We showed him the full glories of the neighbourhood so thoroughly that in after years when some place of interest was mentioned, he always said "Oh yes, I saw that when I spent those 24 hours at Pit."

I find an entry in my journal, in October 1905, that Ethel and I went to the Meeting of Union for Women Workers and we stayed with Bishop Gore and had the joy of meeting Miss Clifford, the sister of my friend Mr. Edward Clifford: she was known to her friends as "The Angel of Bristol."

<sup>1</sup> The present Head of Lancing College.

## Days at Home

Ethel was always keenly interested in questions of Social Reform. We were both members of the Christian Social Union. She could not understand Christians caring so little for the conditions under which women and girls work, or for the housing and economic questions.

[In the train departing from Winchester, where she had been staying with cousins of Mr. Jervois.]

*November 17, 1905.*

I really have not been able to write before. The Norsworthys are dears—so awfully kind and so pleased to show off their lions. Miss Yonge's house is charming; they had to alter it to make it fit for them to live in, but they tried to make it look as like as possible to what it was before. Yesterday we had a drive in the morning and in the afternoon went over to Hursley and saw the Church, and of course the grave and then went into tea in the Vicarage!—which is entirely unaltered. The man who succeeded Mr. Keble in 1866 is still there; he is 86 years old and a brother of Peter Young. We went all over the house. I saw Mr. Keble's bedroom and sat in his favourite corner, and old Mr. Young who knew him quite well, talked to me. I saw the place where Newman met Mr. Keble and didn't know him, and the little study where I suppose Dr. Pusey came to make his confessions. Wasn't it lovely?

*Eton College, Windsor,  
November 30, 1905.*

I may turn up as soon almost as you get this, to drop my box. It has been a very jolly day here. Norman came to breakfast and I went out with him afterwards and saw his room after Chapel. The wall

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game of course was the event of the day, played from 12.30 to 1.30. You *would* have enjoyed that—standing about in the mud and the cold watching an entirely incomprehensible game! I did quite enjoy it really though, because everybody was so excited. One Colleger came in to see Miss Ward and said he had not been able to sleep the night before for nervousness! It was a drawn game, neither side scoring. In the afternoon it rained; I took Norman and a boy named Grant to “sock tea” at Fuller’s; afterwards they had to rush home for lock-up, and I went to St. George’s Chapel.

Winnie comes here to-morrow to stay with Miss Ward. Ronnie Knox is such a dear.

## CHAPTER IV

### LAST DAYS AT HOME (1906-1908)

ERNEST and Alex returned in November and we followed them to Pitcalzean in December. I had gone to London before Ethel, and she writes to me :

*Pitcalzean,  
January 29, 1906.*

My lectures are going to be on all the February Thursdays.

Mrs. — sent a novel for A. and me to read. I at once scented controversy, and sure enough it is about the marriage of a ritualistic priest with a Highland girl; the girl pined away and died within a year. I wrote such a chaffing letter to Mrs. — about it, but not one I think she could take offence at—also a piece of seriousness at the end !

The dogs are most engaging—how pretty Tim has grown. They follow us about incessantly.

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

*12 Harley House,  
March 6, 1906.*

It has been so delicious up at Pit—I didn't at all want to go away ! You are a very nice Host and Hostess.

I am very busy, getting ready some more lectures, for rich smart girls this time. They have to be in

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quite different language from the others. I am horribly alarmed because this is much more "awbaw."<sup>1</sup> The lectures *may* be given in Lord Halifax's house, though it is not quite settled.

We went to the *Midsummer Night's Dream*: it was so nice—such lovely fairy scenes. And to the Hippodrome on Monday! Not very Lenten I am afraid, and I think X. is rather shocked. I don't know what she will say when I tell her I am going to take Geoff and Angela to Maskelyne and Cook's on Saturday: but I really can't resist those kiddies.

I got myself such a lovely brown velvet frock to match your hat, and you can't think how charming I look! You do give such very nice presents.

*Holy Saturday, 1906.*

Indeed we do not say no to your delightful sweets, which we long to fall upon at once, and have the greatest difficulty in restraining ourselves!

Easter is difficult, as you say, without Mr. Jervois: but at St. Mary Magdalene's there is so much beauty and joy in the very sorrow itself that I really think it is easier for us than it is for you up in the north. I don't know how to express it at all. We had a most beautiful little address this morning in the ante-communion service at 7.30 from Mr. Giraud, on the departed souls; he looked so like Mr. Jervois sitting at the chancel gates, and he said exactly the same things. It makes it all so true and real and near. We had a beautiful Three Hours from him and a packed church. All this helps us immensely to be

<sup>1</sup> "Awbaw" was an expression of Mr. Jervois's, and became a stock phrase in the Romanes language. It signifies something which is rather grand, and which *may* uplift one overmuch and lead to snubs.

## Last Days at Home

very, very happy even in the middle of sorrow for Mr. Jervois.

[To me : à propos of some remark in the House of Commons.]

12 Harley House, N.W.  
May 10, 1906.

I should like to send Mr. X. some of our analyses and then see whether he thinks children can't be taught theology!

[The meeting about Church Schools.]

May 11, 1906.

Just back (11.50 p.m.) from the Albert Hall—such a glorious meeting. I am very sorry you should have missed it. Packed of course from top to bottom, and two overflow meetings. Such cheering when the speakers headed by “our Bishop” (as he was called throughout by the others) came in. Before the meeting began, time was filled up by singing hymns—with very fine effect, it being so enormous a crowd. The Bishop made a magnificent speech, not long but covering the whole ground, so that, as Bishop Talbot said, he made it difficult for the rest to follow him. All the way through he was interrupted by the *whole* mass of people shouting “Hear, hear!” or “Shame!” or whatever was the appropriate remark. In one place he mentioned Dr. Clifford, and there was a hiss to make your blood curdle, at which he said—“No, no, no hissing to-night of an individual”; his keynote was charity—he began by saying that he hoped he would say nothing to-night which he would be sorry for on Whitsunday. All the speakers were good; the Bishop of Stepney perhaps the best



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and deepest; Wace very humorous and really excellent—said the House wanted to give the children skim milk instead of the “sincere milk of the word”; Lord Halifax so carried away by his own reflections (very, very spiritual and pious) that he entirely forgot to mention the resolution—vote of thanks to the Bishop—which he was supposed to move! Mr. Brooke made a very fighting, jubilant speech—Mr. Wyndham very fine.

[After a visit in Yorkshire.]

12 Harley House,  
May 28, 1906.

I could not very well get here earlier, as the first train started so very early from Scarborough. I had such a nice week-end. The school is delightful, and so is Miss Body, who is very much of our religion and loves St. Matthew's, so of course we chummed up very much. She is very keen about religious instruction for children of the upper classes, and the instruction she gives her children is most admirable. They have just begun having the “Catechism” system in the school, so I came in for a Catechism on Sunday afternoon. She was very much interested to hear of St. Mary Magdalene's Catechism, and I am going to send her some things from here that she wants to see.

[After a Retreat in a Community House.]

Pitcalzean,  
October 14, 1906.

I hope you are getting on well.<sup>1</sup> The Retreat was very nice, but not the addresses; at least I

<sup>1</sup> I was helping in a Mission at Bury, Lancs.

## Last Days at Home

did not care much for them. Mr. — is an ultra-Catholic and very controversial—*e.g.* he talked of “Christians and Protestants.” I don’t like that much in Retreat; it may have its place elsewhere. But of course all this did not spoil the Retreat itself. I went on to Oxford and saw Giles and the Scotts. Then I had a very cold journey north—the temperature must have fallen suddenly. There was a woman with her three children in the carriage, and I discovered she was a Churchwoman who was going to live in Inverness, her old home; she had been confirmed two years ago at Portsmouth. Now her husband, a sailor, has died and she is going to live in Scotland again. Wasn’t this lucky that I should meet her? I have of course written to Mr. Mackintosh. She would most probably have drifted back to Protestantism, not being very well instructed. I got rather a horrid cold from the journey.

One of the things Mr. X. said was that Higher Critics are tools of the devil. The Sisters chaffed me about this—one, a very clever young one, especially; she has just got the Archbishop’s Diploma and is very advanced!

I don’t *think* it will be very long now before I go to — D. S. doesn’t seem to think there need be delay; I have written to him to-day, and it rather depends on the result of that—what I do. Personally, I should be afraid of waiting too long. I think it will be next year. I have just told Alex, who is very glad about it. I suppose it would not be till the summer or autumn, because of finishing up things like the coaching of that pupil for the Diploma, etc. How easy it is to do rather hard things if you feel quite sure they are right! On second thoughts, I don’t think this is always true; but it is sometimes—*e.g.*

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with big decisions like this. It simplifies everything, anyhow.

During the year 1905–1906 Fritz worked at various things, and lectured on the Gospels in Mr. Gamble's parish, Holy Trinity, Sloane Square. I find a note : "At one of our luncheon parties we were much amused by the opinions of the unorthodox among the guests on optimism and free will." I remember one of these guests, one who is still very dear, absolutely refusing to believe any one of us was happy—in spite of Fritz's and my avowals that we were.

We went to many plays, among them *Le Monde où l'on s'ennui*, which is one of the most amusing of French plays.

At this time the now flourishing scheme of the Archbishop's Diploma was mooted and Ethel was begged to go in for it. But as she had her Oxford First Class, she by no means felt inclined to do so, especially as she was contemplating her entry in the Religious Life.

In my journal I find that the family for our Christmas diversions at Pitcalzean 1905–1906 acted *Box and Cox* and one of Lady Bell's delightful Fairy Tale Plays, *The Tinder Box*. On January 11, 1906, we had a dance for all the servants and tenants, and on the 13th we kept the 21st anniversary of Nannie coming to us, and gave her photographs of all her nurselings. I mention all these events for this was really the last of our united Christmas Festivals—the very last time we were all together at home. Christmas Day itself was a most wonderful day—the sun shone brightly, the distant mountains were covered with snow, the sea was a deep calm blue—almost a summer sea; and after our joyous Sung Eucharist,

## Last Days at Home

we came down to the shore and walked and laughed in the sunshine, and I remember turning to our dear friend, Father Longridge of the Community of the Resurrection and saying: "I wonder if we shall ever be all together again?" And we never were, and never shall be on earth.

Our Christmases at Pitcalzean were most wonderfully bright. We had an Eve Service and Carols, and many of the household made their Confessions in the Chapel. Then on the day itself we had a Sung Eucharist at eight a.m.—a particularly joyous and noisy breakfast—Morning Prayer with hymns, then a walk and usually the decoration of the Christmas Tree. We had Evensong and Carols in Chapel and then the Family Tree. Everyone of the household had two or three presents, and every one of the family was extremely demonstrative in his or her expressions of gratitude. I remember how amused we were on one of these festas to find three or four copies of Father Congreve's new book being given about to various people by various people. Then came the Christmas Dinner, and after dinner there were games and music and—bed. On one of the following days the Christmas Tree was again lit up for the village children, each of whom received a gift.

This is a general description of our Christmas Days at Pitcalzean—the one of 1905–6 was perhaps the culminating point. I am reminded of a passage in the *Récit d'une Sœur*. Readers and lovers of that most lovely book will remember how much the members of the family of La Ferronnays dwelt on the joy of the life *at home*, all together. How the hero and heroine, Albert and Alexandrine loved to be with his father and mother and sisters and brothers. After the marriage of Albert and Alexandrine, Mrs. Craven

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writes :—" Nous etions, hélas, au sommet, mais il faut convenir que ce sommet était doré, et que, si jamais on a pu dire d'un bonheur qu'il était trop grand, trop complet pour pouvoir durer, on a pu le dire du nôtre alors."

Mrs. Craven adds a note that her favourite sister Eugénie said to her during this perfect summer : " Oh, ma chère que la vie est jolie que sera alors la ciel ? La mort vaut donc mieux que tout cela." Eugénie married Count Adrian Le Mun and was the mother of Count Albert Le Mun, whose book, *Ma Vie Sociale*, was the crown of a long and honoured life. But this is a digression. On one of these happy Christmas Days Ethel gave me as a Christmas carol the hymn which is quoted further on.<sup>1</sup> We used to sing it in chapel as an Introit on Christmas Day.

We had a very happy spring in 1906, and saw many friends. Mr. Ronald Knox, the brilliant author of *Loose Stones*, was brought up from Eton to a London Nursing Home, and the Bishop of Manchester and Mrs. Knox were good enough to use our flat as a pied à terre, which was a great pleasure to Ethel and me. Miss Winifred Knox, now Mrs. James Peck, was, as I have said, one of Ethel's most beloved friends.

We had a delightful visit (one of many) to our dearest of dear friends, the Rev. William and Mrs. Ingham. Mrs. Ingham had been my bridesmaid, and was known always among her friends of her and my youth as " The Fair Anne," a name she has not and never will lose, being of that elect number who never grow old. They were Uncle Bill and Aunt Anne to my children.<sup>2</sup> " Anne " was Ernest's Godmother, and

<sup>1</sup> See p. 86.

<sup>2</sup> My fourth son has married Cicely, the youngest daughter of our dear friends.

## Last Days at Home

Mr. Ingham and "Mr. Fritz," as he called her, were devoted friends. They went long rides on bicycles and discussed and argued interminably.

We had also a very happy summer and made another friend. Mr. Kenneth Mackenzie, now Vicar of Selly Oak, Birmingham, who had been a Prefect at Radley when Ernest was a little boy. Mr. Mackenzie must forgive me for saying it is quite impossible to express what he was to us in the sad years which were so soon to come. He was spending the summer not far from Pitcalzean, and for some years after he was able to take the place of our much loved Padre Longridge, who in 1907 went to South Africa for two or three years, and Mr. Mackenzie most kindly ministered to us at Pitcalzean.

In January 1907 Ernest's eldest son was born, and the arrival of her nephew gave Fritz great pleasure. She enjoyed teasing me and pretending to take great care of me on account of the dignity which had come upon me. I have an entry in my journal, "Mr. Giraud dined with us, and he and Fritz 'ragged' me all the evening, until I was perfectly ill with laughter."

[Written while helping at a Mission.]

*February 19, 1907.*

The Mission would be quite delightful if it wasn't for the Mission evening sermons. Mr. X. is quite above the heads of the bad people, and even also those of many of the good. They are not one's ideas of Mission sermons at all. I simply long for one of R. E. G.'s or Mr. Frith's ordinary evening sermons. Mr. X. talks of dualism, and of "the superseding of

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our personality by demoniac possession not being foreign to our experience"—all in measured calm tones, and very, very long, till I was quite weary, so that what people unaccustomed to sermons and church-going must have felt like I can't think. Everybody is disappointed, even Mr. B., who thinks Mr. X. can do no wrong. I should have thought one would have things like—"What about that lie you told all those years ago? Do you think it is over and done with? NO! NO! etc., etc. There is nothing the least like that. I wish Mr. C. was doing it; he is simple at least, if not forcible. The Church was much less full last night than it was on Sunday (when it was *packed*); and the men's side was markedly emptier. So sad—such an opportunity. I think he is tired; he has only just finished another Mission. Of course it's early to judge, but I am so afraid that even if he does get more missionary later, by that time the bad people will all be driven away.

Mr. C. does women in the afternoons, and I believe they are quite nice, on the Ten Commandments—a sensible subject. I shall see you on Thursday, so will not tell you everything. I gave a lesson to some charming children on the Incarnation.

In the spring of that year she and I went off to Bruges for a week-end, one of our few continental journeys. We had two perfect days there and were very happy and horribly ill coming home.

Fritz also worked at Lambeth under the direction of the heads of the Lady Margaret Settlement, and we had various parties and went out together. We dined at Lambeth one night and met many interesting people, among them Nansen, the Norwegian explorer, whom I had met long ago. Ethel had a

## Last Days at Home

lovely voice and one of her great pleasures was her membership of the Bach Choir.

At one of our luncheon parties, Lord Halifax told us the following story: Two ladies (I think he knew them) had been hunting somewhere in Lincolnshire, and after the run they gave their horses to a groom and hired a gig. Presently they got to a bridge and saw a man looking very tired, so they either offered him a lift or he asked for one. Presently they came to an inn, and without any thanks he got off the back seat and made his way into the inn, round which a small crowd had gathered. The landlord came out to them, and as he came out the man brushed clean past him. So they, a little bit vexed by the man's want of manners, asked who the man was. The landlord said he had seen no one: "Oh yes," they said, "you must have seen him," and they began to describe the man. The landlord grew very puzzled and said: "Please will you come into my house for a minute?" So they went into the inn and the landlord took them into a room, where on the bed lay the man they had seen—dead. "This is the body of a man who was drowned," said the landlord. "His body has just been found, and we are awaiting the coroner." But the cream of the story is yet to come. Lord Halifax was driving across a moor with only a servant, so he began talking to him and presently told him this story; whereupon the man said, "*Of course*, you know what that was, my Lord. It was his soul visiting the man's body. The soul of a dead person always visits the body every 24 hours until burial."

Ethel was passionately fond of stories of the unseen.

In the summer of 1907 we began to feel great



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anxiety about our dear Ernest. It was decided that he should try the life at a sanatorium, and our happy life at Pitcalzean was thus broken up. But still we hoped the disease was being combated, and we had a fairly happy summer. At the end of the summer, my darling girl went off to her future Community for three weeks. She and I met at the end of this time and went on a visit to Mr. Trevelyan,<sup>1</sup> who had at that time a charming house in Guildford. It was while we were going down to Guildford that Ethel told me the time was definitely fixed for her to test her Vocation. She was to go on January 25. We went on just as usual. We had a particularly delightful visit to her brother, Jack, at Oxford, meeting his great friend, Mr. Holsapple (who sang comic American songs until we rocked with laughter), now a Canon of the American Church. We tried to make these last weeks as sunny as possible.

We had an expedition to Eton (one of frequent ones) to our darling Giles's Confirmation in Eton College Chapel. A few days before Mr. Giraud went to see Giles and his elder brother Norman at Eton. I remember he came in to lunch, and at the last moment Ethel took it into her head to go too, and dashed off in a great hurry. She told me afterwards what a radiantly happy afternoon that had been. Mr. Giraud heard Giles's First Confession in St. Stephen's, Clewer; and then the whole party played about and had tea, laughing and chaffing. It was a peculiarity of Ethel's religious life, and of those dear ones who are with her beyond the veil, that she could always turn from grave to gay and vice versa with no sense of incongruity. She entered unconsciously perhaps into the spirit of

<sup>1</sup> Vicar of St. Matthew's, 1884 to 1907; Warden of Liddon House, 1907 to 1918.

## Last Days at Home

“What God has cleansed, call thou not common.” She could enjoy a good play and get up the next morning to an early Eucharist; she could teach a child about God and the next moment be ready to play hockey or any other game. Mr. Jervois had always been an example of this. I suppose it comes from the habitual sense of the Presence of God.

In the autumn I had a charming letter from the dear Primus of the Scottish Church, Bishop Wilkinson of blessed memory, sending my darling girl his blessing on her new life. A fortnight afterwards “God’s finger touched him and he slept.”

[To me.]

*At the Community House of ———,  
October 26, 1907.*

I am still enjoying everything here very much. I take “charges” alone now; it is rather alarming, but the girls are under such splendid discipline that they don’t easily get out of hand, even with a stranger who knows very imperfectly what they are allowed or not allowed to do.

Yesterday I went for quite a long walk with Sister —, who is a most delightful person, so clever and fresh and good. I think from what any Sisters, whom I talk to, let drop, that they all know why I am here.

Just had a note from Mrs. Warren<sup>1</sup> asking me to dinner next Saturday. It will be very funny going straight from here to there.

<sup>1</sup> Now Lady Warren, the wife of Sir Herbert Warren, President of Magdalen, who have always been, since we knew them, the kindest of friends.

# The Story of an English Sister

October 29, 1907.

I continue very happy here. I have been for two delightful walks with Sister —, who is a most charming creature. I like her immensely—she is quite unordinary. The more I see of these people the more struck I am with the number of really remarkable women there are here—intellectually as well as in other ways. There was a Clothing here yesterday morning of four Postulants—a very beautiful service—High Mass followed. All the music here is the same that they have at Cowley and very beautifully done, so you can imagine how I revel in it. They say that a Profession is even nicer; it is made a great day for the newly professed. They wear bunches of white flowers and lots of their friends come. (So they can to a Clothing of course.) It's so nice here, everything being so natural and human. I believe in some Communities it is all done privately. I am getting quite good at bedmaking.

Give my love to Uncle Will and Aunt Anne, and Cicely<sup>1</sup> and Hylda—they are all dears, and I purr back over *them*.

I feel as if my letter was cold and hard; but it is not meant to be—I do feel all that you are feeling,<sup>2</sup> and it is that which adds to what *I* feel; but I don't find it very easy (or very profitable) to express *my* feelings; so I don't say anything much, but take it for granted. I don't think that after the first, we shall feel anything but glad, "rejoicing that we are counted worthy," etc.

Don't say anything to anybody even now, except to the people who do know, like Dyce and R. E. G.

<sup>1</sup> Now Mrs. Norman Romanes.

<sup>2</sup> About her decision to test her Vocation.

# Last Days at Home

[The Romanes Lecture.]

*Magdalen College, Oxford,  
November 4, 1907.*

DEAREST ALEX,

. . . . The Lecture was a very "awbaw" affair, and we did long for you—it seemed so stupid that you should both miss it as it was really *great* fun. It was the first thing Lord Curzon had done since he became Chancellor, so of course there was a crowd to see him; and the hoods were very gorgeous; and the Chancellor's gown was very grand, black and gold. Jack thoroughly enjoyed himself, and the Lecture was one after his own heart—very imperialist. We were with the Vice Chancellor's party (the Warrens), which of course made it very nice for us. Jack, being obviously an undergraduate, was stopped five times in his progress towards his reserved seat with us; and each time he surmounted the obstacle by saying, "I am with the Vice Chancellor's party"—his said progress being watched with interest by every one in the Sheldonian (E. can describe to you how public it is) including the undergraduates in the gallery (which was quite full), and each time Jack successfully passed an irate official, these last cheered vociferously: the last obstacle being no less a person than the Master of Balliol. We never realised that the cheering was for Jack until Mr. Hutton<sup>1</sup> told us.

Jack's rooms are most charming—he is lucky. And he is very happy, and very glad he came up,<sup>2</sup> I think. We saw the Bishop of Stepney for a minute

<sup>1</sup> Now Archdeacon of Northampton.

<sup>2</sup> Jack had been a little unwilling to come up to Oxford.

## The Story of an English Sister

after the lecture, and he said he would try to look in to-day on Jack at 5.30. We have also seen Mr. Pullan,<sup>1</sup> and are to have tea with him on Wednesday. We went to the Cowley Fathers' Church yesterday; afterwards I lunched at Balliol with Ronald Knox, and Winnie was there too. Then we had tea with Mr. Palmer and Chapel at Balliol; and afterwards Pat Shaw-Stewart<sup>2</sup> came and spoke to us and was so nice and friendly—wanted us to have tea with him one day, and altogether was very nice. So you see we are kept pretty busy here! We had a nice dinner party on Saturday night, but it was rather disappointing that Lord Curzon utterly refused to come to that or see any one at any time: it would have been very interesting to meet him.

Well, I must end up, as I am in arrears with letters.

Much love to all, from—

FRITZ.

[It had been decided that we should go to my sister's-in-law at Dunskaith for the Christmas festivities.]

12 Harley House,  
Regent's Park, N.W.  
November 15, 1907.

DEAREST ALEX,

I don't know whether Mother has told you this or not: I have definitely decided to go to X. early next year—I think January 25th will be the exact date. There does not seem to be any reason for delaying things, now that E. seems to be pro-

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Leighton Pullan of St. John's, whose books are so well known.

<sup>2</sup> Alas! Mr. Patrick Shaw-Stewart fell December 30, 1917. He was one of the most brilliant men of his year. An old Etonian. His parents, General and Mrs. Shaw-Stewart, had been tenants of ours at Nigg House for one summer, and we became friends.

## Last Days at Home

gressing so well and steadily. If we had been in any acute anxiety about him now, of course I should wait.

I know you will think often of me during this rather difficult time of leave-taking : it will require a great deal of courage which I have not got by nature.

It is a great thing to be able to see you and E. at Pit in the winter and have a jolly reunion of the whole family. But Alex, I wonder if you will think us horrid if we do not come until immediately *after* Xmas, instead of immediately before? Of course, if we were all going to be at Pit together like the old Xmas, it would be quite different. But as it is, we shall not really see you properly—we should not be *spending* Xmas with you : dear as Auntie is, there is something a little dreary in the thought of being at Dunskaith on that day, after all the other nice Xmas we have had in north and south. I confess to being a little hungry for one more (my last) great Feast Day at St. M. M.'s. I expect you will understand that. Our idea is to come north after that—perhaps on the 26th. How long are you going to be at Pit? I don't think I should stop on after you had gone. I suppose you will not be there longer than 10 days or so—but also, I hope, not less than that, as it wouldn't be worth while, would it, for you to come for so short a time? I hope you are not going to arrive until *just* before Xmas, as I should grudge the days we were not with you. We could have our service all together on the 1st, couldn't we? so we should not lose that.

As Mother and I keep saying to each other, it would be so absolutely different if Xmas Day were really going to be *with* you : half the niceness of Xmas Day is being with one's people—eating and drinking with them, sitting over the fire (!) talking to them : and

## The Story of an English Sister

you see we should *not* have that—only tantalising glimpses—and if it was a regular blizzard of a day, as it *can* be on Xmas Day up there, even going to Mass would be rather a difficulty. So we hope you will not think it want of affection in us—it certainly is not that—rather the reverse.

I am not writing to tell E. about my plans. I don't know whether he knows them, and am leaving it to you to tell him when and as you think it best. I feel pretty sure he will not at all approve. But you might tell him that there is no possible argument that he might bring forward against it which I have not faced not once but over and over again; and that what does seem to be a strong inward conviction or call seems to triumph over them all. And tell him that it is no sudden impulse, but the result of a real struggle of many years; that the thought of it has been in existence ever since I was about eight years old. And tell him too that no one has influenced me towards it—least of all the Sisters themselves. Tell him how for years I put the thought away because I thought it would be wrong to leave Mother; and how it was Mr. Jervois who said—"If you could leave her to be married, you could leave her for this." If it *isn't* right, and all this is a kind of obsession which has taken hold of me thro' some fault of my own, and I am not really suited to the life, it will most assuredly be discovered before I have been there very long. They reject many of their candidates. But I could not, feeling as I do, conscientiously stop at home quietly without *trying*. And tell him I shan't be a bit different, except nicer, I hope; I shan't talk or look pi, or anything of that sort. I shall come home once a year (I hope he will let me into the house ! !), and when once we are all used to it we shall

## Last Days at Home

be as merry as grigs. Remind him how he didn't like Egypt before he went or India or anything new. And tell him to write to me soon.

Your very loving—  
FRITZ.

[From Ernest to Ethel.]

*Nordrach-on-Dee,  
Banchory, N.B.  
November 16, 1907.*

DEAREST FRITZ,

How glad I feel for you. Though for the rest of us I feel rather sad. How much of the year shall we be able to spend together? I suppose we can write as freely as ever.

I do in a sort of way quite envy you. I think that a Vocation of that sort must be about the greatest blessing that can befall any one.

You see I have been in a sort of (very much "sort of") retreat for the last three months. At least I've had heaps of time to think over lots of things, in consequence I am far less "Prot" than formerly. There seem to be a lot of "I's" in this letter which was meant to be about you.

I do hope you will be in the successful minority,<sup>1</sup> though if not I shall be selfishly pleased.

Ever yours,  
G. E. R.

[To Ernest : Laird was our pet name for him.]

*12 Harley House,  
November 19, 1907.*

DEAREST LAIRD,

I can't tell you at all how touched I am by your letter : it made me "blub." I had not thought

<sup>1</sup> Ethel had told him that only a "minority" were professed.



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that you would understand so well—so very few people will, you know—even some who are not Prot at all will not. Thank you *so* much. It makes it so much easier—having a family like mine !

I shall get three weeks' holiday every year. I do not know about letters; but anyhow I shall be able to send open public letters to be sent round after the manner of St. Paul. And when you come to London you must come to see me; they are very nice to visitors, and it is a place quite worth seeing.

I am afraid this will not catch the country post. I was going to have written early this afternoon, after Mrs. X. and M. had gone—they were lunching here. But Philip,<sup>1</sup> just back from America, came in at 3.30 and stayed till 6.15 ! talking hard as usual, about his experiences, which he described very vividly. He is delighted with America. This morning was taken up first with talking to Mr. Giraud, who had been spending 24 hours here as a sort of little holiday; then with being painted by a girl who does portraits rather well<sup>2</sup>; I thought Mother would like one of me. So to-day has simply flown and nothing seems to be done, as it was mostly taken up with talking to people.

I will write the rest I have to say to A. Thank you *so* much, dearest Laird; you *are* a dear.

FRITZ.

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

I am so much touched by E.'s letter to me : what an old darling he is—less of a Prot than any of the

<sup>1</sup> Father Waggett.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Rough, who painted a clever portrait of my darling. Miss Rough is now a member of a Religious Community.

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boys ! He *understands* so well. Really it is all being made wonderfully easy for me. Thank you so much for your prayers.

I remember I was feverishly anxious to give Ethel all the pleasures I could manage, and one day in the late autumn, she and I and our Cousin Dyce and Mr. Giraud went for a long motoring expedition into Surrey and Sussex. It was a stormy October day with gleams of sunshine, and she enjoyed, as she always did the long drive and the sense of adventure.

[From my Journal.]

“ We had a very happy Christmas. We stayed in London for it, as both Fritz and I wanted to be at St. Mary Magdalene’s. Mr. Giraud’s sermon on Xmas Day was most beautiful, ‘ My delight is with the sons of men.’ We all made our Communion at St. Mary Magdalene’s. It is very nice to think the three maids were there. We had our Tree on Xmas afternoon, with the Ewarts and Marion, her Geoff and Angela, Mrs. Pollock, Philip, Mr. Giraud and Dyce. Fritz has had a picture painted of herself by Toussa Rough as a Christmas gift to me—very clever. Gerry gave me a dispatch-box, dear boy. We had a lovely Sung Mass at 10 a.m. on St. Stephen’s Day, and we had seven children to tea and a Christmas Tree. Jack and the boys went north at night, and we went to ‘ Mollusc ’—very, very good. Wyndham and Mary Moore—the latter really wonderful. It is an extraordinary study of character, and so simple—no sparkling epigrams, everything perfectly natural.

“ Mr. Russell <sup>1</sup> came to tea yesterday and Agnes

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell.

## The Story of an English Sister

Mackay,<sup>1</sup> and Mr. Mackay and Mr. Giraud to lunch. The last-mentioned kind dear friend took us to *The Night of the Party*—a screaming farce. Weedon Grossmith too funny for words.”

Then on the 29th, Gerald, Ethel and I went up to Scotland and stayed with my sister-in-law at Dunskaith. Ernest seemed much better and we had a few most merry days. My dear sister was the kindest of people and she had made the great rambling house bright and comfortable and enjoyed the large and merry party thrust on her hands. Gerald had produced a little comedy which his brothers and sister acted. Mr. Giraud spent a week with us.

I had to go away to give some addresses in Edinburgh and Glasgow about the coming Pan-Anglican Congress, but in a few days Ethel and the boys joined us in town; very soon Eton and Oxford claimed them, and she and I were left alone. We had one final concert and for the last time I saw her in evening array. One much loved friend, Father Philip Waggett, came in several times.

And at last the Feast of the Conversion of St. Paul dawned. She and I and two of our faithful maids, and our dear “Cousin Dyce” went to a special Eucharist at St. Mary Magdalene’s, and it was only when the Gospel was begun, I realised the extraordinary appropriateness, “And every one that hath forsaken houses or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands for My Name’s Sake, shall receive an hundredfold, and shall inherit everlasting life.” Dear Ethel, God gave her that entrance into Life very soon. Then we came back

<sup>1</sup> Sister of the Rev. H. F. B. Mackay.

## Last Days at Home

to breakfast, and I remember I was anxiously running about trying to get things I thought might be useful for her. We set off together for the station in a dismal four-wheeler (which shows that taxis in 1908 had not absolute sway !), and I remember trying to cheer Fritz up and begging her not to cry, as if we were going to a funeral, whereas, it was more like a preparation for a bridal.

I don't know if I wished her to get tired of it while she was a Postulant; all I can say is, that if she had suddenly walked in on one of the spring mornings of 1908, and declared herself certain of her non-fittedness, I should have cried for joy *at that time*, for those first months were dreadful.

Her letters tell of her life, and I used to say to her, "If ever you do become a great Religious, darling, and your life is written by some unborn niece, what a pleasing picture your letters will give of Community Life." She laughed joyously. She did not share the views of one or two of our dear friends that biographers should make no use of letters. Little did I think I should be called to tell the Story of Her Short Life.

[Written while I was in Edinburgh.]

Dunskaithe,  
January 15, 1908.

Very many thanks for the shortbread and cigarettes which safely arrived to-day. So sorry to hear of your headache but hope it is a thing of the past.

R. E. G. and I had a delicious walk up by the loch and Cummins's,<sup>1</sup> then lunched at Pit; and walked down with Alex and had foolish games, etc., at

<sup>1</sup> A little house in a wood, which we thought very like a house in one of Grimm's *Fairy Tales*.

## The Story of an English Sister

Dunskait. We are going to have Mass to-morrow here at 10. On Friday there is going to be one at Pit for Ernest's special benefit. Mr. Hutton has given Jack leave to arrive on Sunday, so that is all right.

The Vicar has given me the sweetest little crucifix. He does spoil me.

I have added to this chapter, which concludes the story of her life at home, some hymns she wrote during these later years.

### A CHRISTMAS COMMUNION HYMN <sup>1</sup>

O LOVING Father, take our praise  
On this most blessed Day of Days,  
When Jesus Christ Thine Only Son  
Was born into a world undone.  
Him, Spotless Lamb, Who came to die  
We plead before Thee, God Most High;  
And that Thou gavest us Thy Christ  
We offer Thee our Eucharist.

O Word Made Flesh, all hail to Thee,  
Enthron'd upon a Damsel's knee!  
Our King Adorable doth take  
Form of a servant for our sake.  
O Wondrous Love, set us on fire;  
Us with Thy Purity inspire;  
Unite us to Thyself and all  
Thy Church now keeping Festival.

O Holy Spirit, through Thy Might  
A Maid becomes a Mother bright.  
Meek Mary is Theotokos,  
And God is born to bear a Cross:  
For this we bring our praise to-day,  
And for Thy gifts we humbly pray;  
Make Thou our hearts a royal throne  
To set th' Incarnate Lord upon.

<sup>1</sup> We used to sing this hymn in the Chapel at Pitcalzean to the tune of Hymn 21 in the Cowley Carol Book.

## Last Days at Home

O Blessed Trinity in One,  
O Father, Holy Ghost and Son,  
Humble, because of what Thou art,  
Joyful, we lift to Thee our heart.  
Th' Eternal Father and the Dove,  
Come when our Jesus comes in love;—  
“God with us” is our song alway,  
But most on happy Christmas Day.—AMEN.

E. G. R.

### A HYMN FOR LENT

O FATHER, in this time of Lent,  
When Holy Church bids me repent,  
Thy strength'ning Spirit send, I pray,  
To lead me on my painful way.

So hard am I, and cold and bare,  
Yet Christ's sufficing grief would share;  
He kneels beside me as I kneel,  
The wounded Hands on mine I feel.

Love, hold me; I with Him confess  
To Thee, O Love, my shame's distress;  
Father, my poor repentance take,  
And shrive me for Thy dear Son's sake.—AMEN.

E. G. R., 1905.

### AN EASTER HYMN FOR CHILDREN

COME, Boys and little Maidens, sing  
With all your might to Christ the King:  
Forth from the gloomy tomb He rose  
To-day, and conquered all His foes.  
Come, Boys and little Maidens, sing  
With all your might to Christ the King.

The Lord of Life was dead before;  
Now He's alive for evermore—  
Alive and strong and bright and free—  
Our living Lord and God is He.  
Come, Boys and little Maidens, sing  
With all your might to Christ the King.

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We know that we with Him can win  
Our conquests over Death and sin;  
To the Lord Jesus we belong—  
With His New Life He makes us strong.  
Come, Boys and little Maidens, sing  
With all your might to Christ the King.

One Easter Day the King will come  
To wake and call His children home;  
Right gladly shall we rise to see  
Jesus, and ever with Him be.  
Come, Boys and little Maidens, sing  
With all your might to Christ the King.—AMEN.

## HYMN OF THE RESURRECTION

(FROM THE LATIN OF PETER THE VENERABLE, 1092–1156.)

STAY thy crying, Magdalena,  
For 'tis peace with thee once more;  
This is not the house of Simon—  
Fled that time of sorrow sore.  
Thousand ways fling forth thy sadness,  
Thousand times sing out thy gladness:  
Hark! the Alleluia sounds.

Be thou merry, Magdalena,  
Show thy face serene and bright;  
Over now is all thy penance,  
Ris'n upon thee shines thy light;  
Christ has brought us forth from prison—  
Made Death captive, for He's risen:  
Hark! the Alleluia sounds.

Clap thy hands, O Magdalena,  
See Him who was in the tomb;  
Vanquisher of Death, He cometh,  
Leaves the silent fearful gloom:  
Him Whose dying thou wast mourning  
Welcome now to thee returning:  
Hark! the Alleluia sounds.

## Last Days at Home

Lift thy head, look, Magdalena,  
Lo ! thy dead Lord stands alive ;  
Gaze upon that Face of beauty,  
Contemplate those Wounds, those Five ;—  
Gleam they forth like pearls of morning,  
His New Life and ours adorning :  
Hark ! the Alleluia sounds.

Live then, O Magdalena,  
He, thy Light, returns to thee ;  
Let thy heart leap up in gladness,  
From Death's power He sets thee free ;  
Never shall thou be despairing,  
But His Love and Joy be sharing :  
Hark ! the Alleluia sounds.—AMEN.



## CHAPTER V

### ON SOME RELIGIOUS DIFFICULTIES (1907)

ONE of Ethel's friends, like many thoughtful people, had been much perplexed by modern difficulties of faith. She has generously allowed me to use the correspondence between Ethel (whom she consulted) and herself.

12 Harley House,  
Regent's Park, N.W.  
March 24, 1907.

MY DEAR —

(I hope I may call you this, and that you will call me Fritz as all my friends do.)

I am sending you a book by an excellent person, Dean Robbins; it strikes me as being for its size an excellent specimen of apologetic—of course it is very condensed: every sentence of it might be expanded. But it is sound and good.

But I am not so anxious that you should read what is confessedly a *defence* of the Christian position, as that you should see something of what the Christian position is—what it involves—its philosophy, in short: and so I do hope you will read Bishop Gore's Bampton Lectures. He is a real theologian. I am writing to Scotland for one of our copies.

There is one thing you asked me which I was for the moment rather at a loss to answer. You said: "I suppose you think it matters very much what one believes?" I think I ought to have answered: "It

## On Some Religious Difficulties

matters most tremendously whether Christianity is true or not. If it is not true, then we are surely of all men most miserable; for I can't see where Mr. Voysey gets any real *proof* of the Fatherhood of God; a great deal in nature tends to combat this view; or of any other comforting doctrine—the life everlasting and so on; whereas if once you accept the Incarnation these follow on from it—in fact they are *Christian* doctrines to which Mr. Voysey has no right, and which he and other Unitarians have unconsciously borrowed from Christianity. When so much is involved in accepting or rejecting Christianity, it cannot be a light thing to do either.

If you meant: “Do you think people who reject Christianity are lost?” my answer is that it is the allegiance of the heart and will which our Lord Christ yearns for: it is unthinkable that He should blame a bewildered intellect. Only, what we have to be careful about is to see that it is really not some defect in the will which *causes* this bewilderment—some pride, or fear of too high a moral standard; or some deficiency in our sense of sin. Of course no one can judge of another person's case: but I should have thought that in your case loss of intellectual faith was due in great measure to the fault of others—even of the Church of England as a whole.

You are in my prayers.

FRITZ.

I send also *Divine Immanence*,<sup>1</sup> which is a great essay by a really great man. It wants any amount of careful reading. The style is a snare—it is so lucid and carries one along easily—but the arguments repay *slow* and close attention.

<sup>1</sup> By the Rev. J. R. Illingworth.

# The Story of an English Sister

*Smedmore House,  
Corfe Castle, Dorset,<sup>1</sup>  
April 11, 1907.*

MY DEAR —,

It is a very wet morning here; we cannot go out with any pleasure or profit; and I feel rather inclined for some Theology. If it bores you, you needn't read it, you know!

But, as always, I feel dissatisfied with my answers to your questions and want to supplement them. Especially as regards *prophecy*. I am almost inclined to think that I must have given the impression of minimising the place and importance of the O. Test., whereas what Oxford and "criticism" have taught me has only strengthened my reverence for it and for God's ways of working. I do believe, *e. g.* more and more convincedly that "the Holy Ghost (that is, God) . . . spake by the prophets." How else can one account for their work? Their personalities, their teaching, are quite unique in history. There has been nothing like them, nothing even parallel or comparative. Here you have a long line of men extending over many generations—differing from one another necessarily in their characters and outlook, yet alike, identical in their aim and object, which is to deepen the spiritual lives of God's chosen people, to foster and strengthen a true and spiritual religion. As times go on we find that the prophets learn more and more about God and His dealings with man. In the earlier prophets we learn that God is King, that He is Ruler and Judge, Father; in the later prophecies He is spoken of as having an even more intimate relation with His people; He is their Saviour, their

<sup>1</sup> We were on a visit to Mrs. Crossley, so well known for her work at Stratford, E.

## On Some Religious Difficulties

Lover; their interests are all His interests; their sorrows His sorrows. And they all looked forward to a time when the people, purged from sin and with surrendered wills, should be really, not only ideally, God's own people, serving Him perfectly. In the prophets' minds very often the whole nation is personified and spoken of as being a single person. At other times, specially in the later prophecies, there seems to have been a looking forward to a personal Saviour of the people, a man after God's own heart, a King His own Servant as David had been, who should do God's work for Him in saving His people from all their troubles, their captivities—yes and from their sins too, which were the causes of their captivities and punishments. Last of all we have the second (so-called) Isaiah's conception of suffering—the *suffering* servant. Through suffering and death He should save His people—the suffering of His Servant. Some critics here think that the Servant is to be identified with the *nation*, as in other passages. Others think that some particular man is being described as the prophet's ideal. Whatever view we take, we cannot surely fail to see the extraordinary inwardness, the spirituality of such conceptions. The prophets were geniuses in religion. They had an insight into spiritual things; their function was to train the religious instincts of their countrymen, to fix their ideals very high, to point forward to a glorious future which they knew was intended by God for His people. They did, as you know, create a feeling of expectancy and of longing which was at its height when Christ came. This feeling was parallel to that experience in the Gentile world at the same period—the Gentile world which God had been training by a different method: so that in the reign of Augustus Cæsar, both

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in the Jewish and Gentile world, "the fulness of the time" was indeed come.

You see, there is nothing negative in all this that I have said. My one negative sentence will be this: The prophets' work was not, as has been so often supposed, mainly *prediction*: *i. e.* they were not magicians who could see into the future in such a way as to predict the minutest details in the life of Christ. Their work was far nobler, far grander than that—far broader. They were speaking to the people of their own times about the needs of those times, and were trying to draw them to know God better and His purposes for them. That all this was a *supernatural* work, the work of the Holy Spirit, is most emphatically my belief. The prophets were God's messengers sent to prepare the way before Him. The 53rd chapter of Isaiah, whatever may have been in the writer's mind, was no magician's forecast of Christ standing before Pilate, no result of an ecstasy or trance, no words mechanically spoken by one who was being used by God as a senseless tool; but it is the expression of deep religious and spiritual truths—truths which were afterwards actually manifested in Christ—truths such as Christians have learnt to assimilate, but such as the pre-Christian world had no notion of, and the "world" of to-day is simply incapable of comprehending—the truths, namely, that God's strength is made perfect in weakness; that God's power is manifested in meekness and humility; that Love (*i. e. God*) reveals Himself in suffering; that salvation through vicarious suffering is one of the laws of His world—the law of Him who is Love. That the saving Life and Death of Jesus is the complete fulfilment of this teaching no Christian can deny; Christ Himself claimed to be the fulfilment. But

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when we are told by scholars that *e. g.* the word translated “virgin” (in the passage—“Behold a virgin shall conceive,” etc.) does not mean “virgin” at all, but a young marriageable or already married woman; and that Isaiah is speaking of such a one in his own time, and that therefore the passage cannot be taken as a direct prediction of the Virgin Birth—we are not at all put out. Such scholastic interpretations do not affect our view of prophecy *as a whole*. No criticism, no scholarship can affect our perception of the fact that the Spirit of Christ breathes through the length and breadth of the O. T. That *nothing* can take away from us. For my part I much prefer the new and broader view of the work of the prophets (criticism has done a great work for us here); they are far more *reasonable*, far more in keeping with God’s methods of working as we know them—far more in keeping with His law of natural growth, of evolution as we see it in history and science—than the old traditional view of the function of prophecy, viz. that the prophets were *wizards*.

I have spent a long time over this, but I wanted to clear up a little what I tried to say. It is Friday now, but I do want to say something about two other subjects which I feel I spoke of very feebly.

The first is about what is usually called the “kenosis,” *i. e.* the self-emptying of God the Son. Phil. 11–7, “made . . . reputation” should be translated “emptied Himself.” This is of course a great mystery—no one can understand even a little of what it means. But it certainly means this—that God the Son, at the Incarnation, though He was still God and so could not be deprived of any of the attributes of God, voluntarily and necessarily refrained from the exercise of some of those attributes, in order that He

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might truly and really *be* man, and might enter truly and really into our experience. Many people, like you, have shrunk from the idea that He voluntarily refrained during His earthly Life from exercising His Divine Omniscience; yet if He had not done so it is almost inconceivable that His human experience would have been *real* human experience like ours. In His amazing and infinite love for man, it seems that God's self-emptying meant voluntary self-limitation in more ways than one. It does not trouble me at all that our Lord should have used the ordinary thoughts of men at the time when He was on earth; it would never occur to me personally to think of some of these instances as being "slips" or "mistakes." He did not come to teach us science or medicine. He came that He might be one with us: that He might have our experience. There is no limit to the humility and love of God. I forget whether it is Bishop Gore in his Bampton's who likens this self-limitation of God the Son to our experience of human sympathy. A very intellectual and learned man when trying to understand his little child for the purposes either of teaching him or playing with him or comforting him, becomes in proportion to his powers of sympathy *like* his child—he speaks in its own language, he may even be said to think with a child's thoughts—for the time being. So will a very holy and spiritual person always be the most successful in winning sinners to Christ: though he is so different his power of sympathy is so great that for the time he can stoop and bring himself on a level with the sinner, can see with the sinner's eyes. The power of sympathy is specially God-like, Christ-like, because it gives out so much; it is a real self-emptying; it involves tremendous acts of humility and self-sacrifice:

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and, above all (this is my point), it involves self-limitation: the sympathetic father *gives up*—for the time—the exercise of his intellectual gifts—they would only be a hindrance to his sympathetic dealings with his child. The spiritual saint *gives up* for the time the exercise of his powers of communing with God in prayer, and descends to the level of the possibly sordid and in any case unworthy and miserable history of sin—and enters into it better than a less good man would do.

As to the devils, however, I believe in their existence. The other day a man, a priest whom I know personally and who is a very learned scholar and historian—not at all the kind of person you would think of as being credulous or hysterical—rather cold and formidable looking—and very much respected everywhere—especially at Oxford and Cambridge—well, this priest was hearing Confessions, I think during a Mission somewhere; and a woman came to him and tried to make hers, but when just on the point of beginning was entirely unable to do so—as though by some force other than herself—she cried and shrieked even, I believe, and made the attempt vainly over and over again. He was at last quite convinced that she was “possessed”; no soothing on his part did the least good. So at last he used over her the ancient Church service of exorcism; on which she at once became herself, made her confession calmly and was absolved. This happened only a year or so ago. And I believe that though such cases are rare in England or any Christian country, they are not at all rare in heathen countries where the population are really given over to evil. Who are we that we can say there are no such beings as evil spirits? Science itself becomes less and less materialistic every day, and is on the eve



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of admitting the possibility of all kinds of strange "spiritualistic" experiences. Crookes, a great scientist, who made spiritualism a study, is convinced that his extraordinary experiences were due to the operations of devils. The Easterns can tell us a good deal too, if we listen to them. Your Zoroaster man, I expect, knows a lot about spirits.

Now for my third subject—the Resurrection—as to its historical evidence. You said that the differences between the accounts was a stumbling-block. But *whenever* you have narratives of the same event by different persons you find these divergences. No two persons see things in exactly the same way, or receive the same impressions. I have before me a quotation from Paley which is rather striking: "I know not a more rash or unphilosophical conduct of the understanding than to reject the substance of a story by reason of some diversity in the circumstances with which it is related. The usual character of human testimony is substantial truth under circumstantial variety. This is what the daily experience of courts of justice teaches. When accounts of a transaction come from the mouths of different witnesses it is seldom that it is not possible to pick out apparent or real inconsistencies between them. These inconsistencies are studiously displayed by an adverse pleader, but oftentimes with little impression upon the minds of the judge. *On the contrary, a close and minute agreement induces the suspicion of confederacy and fraud.* In other words, the very discrepancy as to detail strengthens the case when all the witnesses are agreed as to the main event.

Don't forget that we not only have the witness of the Gospels and of St. Paul, but of the other writers of the N.T.; and also, the lives of all the twelve

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Apostles. Now with regard to M. Renan's theory. People who are subject to visions and hallucinations *believe in* and *expect* them. A person who has an hallucination that he is being followed about *believes* in the existence of these followers and also *expects* to see them : and then he does seem to see them : his own brain conjures them up before him.

We know that St. Mary Magdalene did not believe in the Resurrection when she went to the tomb with the other women—for they took spices with them to anoint the Body. Even when they found the empty grave the thought of the Resurrection did not occur to them. And even when St. M. Magd. beheld the Lord she did not know Him. A *visionary* would have recognised the subject of his vision *at once*. Exactly the same must be said of the two disciples on the road to Emmaus. The Eleven at Jerusalem were at first terrified and thought they saw a spirit. Here is no belief, no expectancy, such as is essential to the vision theory. There was also no *excitement*, no tension of feeling. The disciples were depressed—they were in low spirits : “ We hoped that it was He Who should have redeemed Israel ” (Luke xxiv. 21), that was their state of mind—not surely the hysterical, unbalanced, excitable state of mind which would produce hallucination; but sorrowful, almost hopeless and despairing.

Then, the nature of the appearances themselves are against the hallucination theory. If the disciples had been visionaries, they would have expected one of two alternative kinds of appearances; either that our Lord would come as a heavenly visitant, in glory as at the Transfiguration; or that He would be as He was before the Crucifixion, on the same terms of intimate love and companionship and familiarity as

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before. What, however, are the facts? There was certainly nothing about Him which *at first* led them to think that He was in anything different from their ordinary experience—no light, no glory. On the other hand, there is a change in His relationship towards them, such a change as they would not have been likely to conceive of in their own imaginations—He is more remote, less familiar: “Touch Me not.”

Again, upon the vision theory, we should expect the subjects of the visions to become more and more affected by them as time goes on—more emotional and ill-balanced at every fresh hallucination. But the forty days once over, we read of nothing but calmness, quietness, wisdom, common sense, on the part of the disciples. “Never did the infant Church display more of the spirit of a sound mind than at the very moment when, upon the theory of visions, she should have been least self-possessed and calm.”

And when we find “the Church of the latter half of the first century exhibiting the calm clear confidence in the power of her Risen Lord which actually distinguishes her, it is impossible to think that she could have sprung out of impressions which, if not correct, could only have been as wild an hallucination as ever occupied or excited the mind of man” (*Milligan*).

Visions when they come to men are like flashes—they do not last. But the manifestations of the Risen Christ which occupied those forty days involve “long and patient intercourse on the part of Jesus”; for there are passages which imply that He taught them much during that time which they had not learnt before. The walk to Emmaus must have taken some time. All this is not in the least like “vision.”

Why, too, if the appearances were visions, did they

## On Some Religious Difficulties

suddenly cease at the end of forty days? Not once afterwards, except in the single instance of St. Paul, not even in the enthusiasm of the early days of converting large numbers to the Faith, not even tho' our Lord had said : " Lo, I am with you always "—not once again did any Christian claim to see the Risen Christ.

Yes, there are certainly great difficulties in the way of unbelief !

I have written all this on various days for my own satisfaction. I foresee that whenever you and I talk, I shall want to write to you afterwards ! Fortunately there is plenty of time here.

I wonder whether you have ever thought out this—that Christianity is faith in and surrender to a *Person*; that apart from it we cannot be *sure* that God has personality, and is not mere Force or some other abstraction; we could only guess it; that Christ is the revelation of the Personality of God : He it is Who makes us understand what God is like, and makes it reasonable for us to worship and to serve. " He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father also." Christianity is no *system*; it is devotion to One Who is our God, Whom yet we can know because He is also Man.

Your affec.

Fritz.

Our friend stayed with us at Pitcalzean that summer. After she had left us " Fritz " wrote to her—

*Pitcalzean,  
September 30, 1907.*

MY DEAR OLD THING,

I ought to have explained better what I meant about consulting Mr. A. or any other Priest,

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if and when you feel ready so to do. It is simply this—that it stands to reason that all will not be easy for you; prayer will not always be a simple matter, for example. To have lost one's grasp of Christ cannot but have brought with it all kinds of difficulties which as yet you may not have foreseen. Even now, at the outset, it is only the advice of such a very untrained person that you are going by, in reading the Gospels, etc. (though I cannot but think that that must be right). You see, I am feeling rather like a person who has rendered rough "first aid" and who is anxious that as little time as may be should be lost in consulting a proper doctor. Because now you are leaving (very wisely) the "intellectual" side of the whole thing, and are launching out into spiritual things, and it is in these latter that a Priest alone<sup>1</sup> is competent to advise and help. One cannot always do these things alone; one is not meant to struggle on alone; the Church is our Mother and provides the help we need. So do not hesitate a moment if you feel drawn to talk to Mr. A. or Mr. B. Either would give far better help than any lay friend possibly could.

But I think I went too far in one thing I said : viz. that Mr. A. would *not* talk about confession; if you went several times to see him, I expect he *would* ultimately get on to that subject and suggest various thoughts about it which might not have occurred to you before. I only meant that he certainly would not start straight away on it, or, in fact, do anything startling or surprising, but would only be very gentle and soothing.

What I really think is this—that if you wanted to

<sup>1</sup> I think Fritz would think this statement a little too strong. Laymen and women are often able to give spiritual advice.

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come back to Communion, it would certainly be right and wise to have some talks with him first; and unwise not to. He is to be away all this week in Retreat, but at home after Saturday.

Don't be in a hurry; but at the same time don't be afraid to *give yourself up*: then grace will work mightily in you.

Your affec.

FRITZ.

*At the Community House,*

*October 19, 1907.*

DEAREST —

Thank you so much for your letter: I am very glad you like the crucifix. I am sorry you had the bother of fetching it, but it is so frail that the shop people said they could not take the responsibility of delivering it at their own risk; so I thought that the best way out of the difficulty. You need not take an hour over writing me a letter—that is great waste of time.

I have a little pamphlet which I am sending you: don't bother to send it back. I thought it might interest you, as it is short and to the point. I am not sure that it puts fully the idea which helps many people—viz. that our sorrow for sin is an offering that we make to our Blessed Lord; and therefore *should cost us something*.

Thank you very much for all your thoughts and prayers for me. We have had a very good Retreat; as X. said afterwards, some of the addresses were very "helpful."

I have just heard from my friend at Oxford: my letter to her had not reached her before; and as she wants me to come, and as Mother is rather keen that

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I should see something of Jack, I think I had better go there. Thank you so much for offering to have me.<sup>1</sup> And thank you for sending on various belongings of mine.

Yes, my dear, I believe it is my duty to try my vocation here, and I shall come sometime next year : only do not mention it to any one—I have told very few people at present. I need all the prayers I can get—especially that I may have “ghostly strength.”

Your affec.

FRITZ.

October 25, 1907.

MY DEAR —,

Many thanks for your letter. Yes, I wish you could have come here, but there will be many opportunities in the future. It is a most delightful place, and it and the people grow upon one. Pray, my dear, that His Will may be done, for that is what both you and I really want, isn't it? Self-mortification would certainly not be my primary reason for coming here, as I am not a Buddhist. You will not lose me, my dear, and I shall not change or be a bit different (though certainly cigarettes will be a thing of the past!)—so do not mind about it in that way from *your* point of view, dear : you will come and see me often, perhaps; and I *may* be in London a good deal; and I shall often think of you. (I am assuming now what is of course not at all certain, that I *do* find my vocation here.) And for *me*, if it is really true, you can only be glad : there can be no other feeling about it whatever.

I am being so hard worked ! They are putting me

<sup>1</sup> While I was still in Scotland.

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to help in the Penitentiary : I take "charges"—*i. e.* I sit with the girls at certain times while they sew. It is rather alarming at first, for they are by nature very wild and undisciplined : some of them have been as bad as women can be. But the discipline here is so marvellously good that they are really very little trouble, though one sits rather on pins and needles until one's time is up. I sit at a high desk while they sit round the table. Sometimes they are allowed to talk, sometimes they have a "silent" time. Then one has to conduct them along the corridors to a meal or to Chapel as the case may be, or out into the garden for recreation. They all seem very happy, though now and then there is a bad outbreak of temper or a breach of discipline, which is always most sternly dealt with. The Penitents' Mistress is a most wonderful Sister : she is quite, quite tiny, with a little voice ; but these hulking great girls all tremble before her : 60 of them, and she has them absolutely under her thumb. Some of them are employed in the laundry ; others do the housework in the morning and sew in the afternoon—it is with these last that I have to do. In the mornings I stand on a landing and "superintend" two girls doing the housework of some of the rooms. I have to assume omniscience of course : even about bed-making which I have been helping in doing!! I never made a bed in my life before—I think it is most fascinating. The rest of the time is filled up with meals, letter-writing, and Chapel. In fact, I may as well give you a time-table—

7 a.m. Mass : 7.45 breakfast : *either* 8.15 to 10.30, or 10.30 to 1, a "charge" on a landing : Matins is immediately after breakfast, so if I have not the early charge I go to that. 12 Sext, which I go to anyhow,



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as the girls have their dinner then and one goes back to them afterwards if one is taking the late "charge." 1 dinner : 3 (almost always) a "charge" which lasts till 5 : at 4.30 I take the girls into their Refectory and have Tea there with them. 5 Vespers : 6.30 a "charge" : 7 Evensong, to which the girls go—then one conducts them to their Refectory and watches them feed : 7.45–8.15 the rest of that "charge" : 8.30 one's own supper : 9 Compline and bed. The Chapel here is very beautiful, and so are the gardens. Between times I go into the garden, if fine, or go for a walk : or I sit in the Visitors' Room, which has a special, rather jolly old Sister to look after it. As at present I am the only visitor, she and I have a tête-à-tête. But I have my meals with all the Sisters, only at a special visitors' table, where a Sister sits, and, luckily for my feelings, some of the people who are learning embroidery here have meals too at this table, though they are not actually living in the Home. So now you have a sort of idea of the life. I get a kind of insight into what a Postulant's life will be like too : it will be this kind of thing only more so. The Postulants and Novices have "charges" given them too, just as I have ; and all our times are marked down for us in a book, which we look at every day.

In a way I am *rather* glad you did not come for the Retreat—I am not sure that it is a good thing to do that kind of thing so hurriedly on a sort of impulse.

I hope you are not "afraid" any more. Our Lord does not call us to do anything which He will not give us strength enough to do. I am longing for the time when I hear that you have come back to Communion—I do not see why you hesitate about at least taking steps towards that : it is the normal way of giving oneself to Him and receiving Him under one's roof.

## On Some Religious Difficulties

Well, I must end up—I have a “charge” in prospect. This Penitentiary work is wonderful—it is an eternal miracle of grace. I said to the Sister: “Why *do* they stay here?” and she said it could not be accounted for except supernaturally. I must tell you about it when we meet.

Your affect.

FRITZ.

12 Harley House,  
Regent's Park, N.W.  
November 12, 1907.

MY DEAR —,

Poor dear old thing, I am sorry, too, to hear how depressed you are all round: indeed I hope I don't ever smile in the way you describe, and I hope I understand a good deal of what you are feeling. It was not to be expected that this habit of attending daily Mass could end in any other way. I hope you bear in mind that I never advised it, and even hinted at what would happen. It was beginning at the wrong end altogether. (I hope you will not think me “calm and superior” if I tell you plainly what I really think. I do not *for a moment* think myself superior to you in any conceivable way—I only think that I have been more fortunate in my opportunities for insight into what Christianity really involves—that's all; it is not anything to my *credit*; the reverse is true—I ought, having had these opportunities, to be very, very different from what I am.) This is what I think is true—that you have not yet been converted. Your emotions were touched, but not your will. You have not given yourself up, like “a little child.” You remember what I hoped you would do—viz. acknowledge that you know very

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little about Christianity, and learn about it. I still think that. That other people are also ignorant is no answer; two blacks do not make a white—besides, no two people are alike, and some can be wonderfully good Christians with little knowledge. But *you* seem to have been called very specially: there has been a crisis with you. You are *meant* to be a very good Christian—you are wanted. And now you write as though you were going to allow your own arrogance to spoil our Lord's intention for you. I can hardly believe that that is what you mean—it can only be a passing emotion.

My dear old thing, I think much of this is due to the excitement you feel about my decision—in other words, to your affection for me. I can't think what I have done to have so many friends and so much kindness. It is very good of you to feel so much about this. But of course you do not understand: all that part of your letter *shows* what I have just been saying, that you don't understand Christianity *a bit*. You are still outside, and will be, until you have begun the Sacramental Life. How *can* you understand or expect to?

But I do hope you will not think badly of me and will trust me when I say I have no alternative: and that both Mother and I are very, very happy.

(If you were to marry, could not I say with some logical justification: "How can you leave your Mother all alone?")

By the way, you must not feel angry with my beloved Padre. Years before I ever saw him this was practically decided on; and his influence has been, in the main, adverse. As to his sermon, I thought it a very good one, but it contained the most ordinary Christian teaching that we must all advance

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in holiness and not be content to stand still; I think I have heard something like it before. Certainly it *is* new to me to connect cruelty with X—. (Yes, I did smile here.) I hope we shall see each other soon; as you seem rather fretted by my opinions and actions I will leave it to you to make an opportunity: but I shall always be *very* glad to see you and talk if you want to.

I wish you knew *at all* how happy we are: even in this life ("now in this time"—Mark x. 30) we share in that joy that was set before Him for the sake of which He endured the Cross. You are called to share in it too, in giving up me: I am one of your possessions: give me, then, cheerfully. Dear old P., believe me, it is not nonsense.

Your loving—

Fritz.

How kind of you to give me cigarettes—I look forward to them much.

[Perhaps I may add that Ethel's dear friend did accept the faith, and is now one of *my* dearest younger friends. I am very grateful to her for giving me these letters, which may be useful to some one else.]

## CHAPTER VI

### EARLY DAYS OF COMMUNITY LIFE (1908-1910)

[To me.]

*At the Community House of —  
St. Paul's Day, 1908.*

It is lucky that you should be at Oxford because it has a Sunday post ! I had quite a fairly nice journey though it seemed rather long and I was feeling very funny, just like a dream. At — Miss B. got into my carriage : wasn't that odd ? She was one of the S.M.M. Sunday School teachers whom I knew quite well by sight. I had heard she was here, but it was very funny she should get in with me. She had been fetching a new girl for the Home. She is still in the Visitors' Room. When I got to the station I found one of the Postulants waiting for me—one I had met before. We walked up to the Home together, and then I went straight to the Rev. Mother who gave me such a welcome and asked after you. After a little time I went to my cell, Fortitude ; a very nice quite big room. Then 4.30, after unpacking, I went down and just saw Sister — who was equally warm and kind, and then we went into tea ; then I was shown the Noviciate by the Senior Novice. This consists of two very large jolly rooms ; one is the common room where I am now writing at the long table ; the other is another large room where classes are held and silence is always observed ; so that if



PORTRAIT FROM A PHOTOGRAPH BY MOWLL AND MORRISON  
TAKEN IN 1905



## Early Days of Community Life

one wants to be undisturbed one goes there. *Here* people talk as much as they like out of silence hours. Then I went to Vespers, sung in honour of St. Paul. Then I came straight back here and began this. All the Novices and Postulants, whom I had had anything to do with, were so absolutely sweet and nice. And they all looked kindly.

At — a streak of light came into the drizzly sky; and by the time we reached our destination there was bright sun and blue sky—it was like an omen. I hope you feel as much better as I do.

Being in the Noviciate is far nicer than being in the Guest Room. It is exactly the same as regards rules, but it is so much nicer being in the middle of the whole thing. This kind of freedom will go on I imagine till one's Clothing. The novices are all such dears. Some I knew before, but there are others I had not made out. There are really quite a lot. They all look as cheerful as possible.

There are two Novices here now both doing needle-work. Just now the clock struck so they got up and one said the prayer for the hour. I am sure I shall never learn them all by heart enough to spout them like that. However I shan't be senior enough to be the spouter for a long time.

Just now the Mistress came to fetch me to see Mother — “awbaw”—who had sent to see me: apparently this really *is* “awbaw.” I found the present Mother there too and they each grasped me by a hand and were absolutely sweet to me. Now I'm back again, and there are a lot of Novices and Postulants all round the table working, writing and reading, and all talking away.

Tell Dyce when you see her to hurry up with the pen—it will be most useful here as there are no



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common pens, apparently. But I will properly write to her and Mr. Giraud to-morrow. Still she and he might like to read this, if you don't mind; so that when I do write to them I will say different things—begin at a later date.

Dear love from Fritz. I feel very happy indeed.

January 28, 1908.

Many thanks for all your letters. Of course, they are just what I like. I don't believe I shall be able to write every day like this when I'm a Postulant; but I will as often as I can. I don't think there will be time, for one thing. What a nice Sunday you seem to have had. What a jolly old thing M. Laminne<sup>1</sup> must be. Tell him I *chose* St. Paul's Day on purpose, and *we* keep it just as much as he does! He seems to think it a pleasing coincidence that I should have gone on that day!

Yesterday we had a practice in the Song Room. We were practising specially for the Mass of the Purification—a great Festival. Such twiddly music. You can imagine how I enjoy it. I don't understand Plainsong notation enough yet; though I can read an untwiddly bit easily enough. You know the music here is very excellent indeed—a sort of she-Cowley.

I am going to have about three charges to-day, so am writing this in the morning when I am more free. Yesterday *was* busy—there wasn't a minute to spare.

<sup>1</sup> I corresponded for years with the Rev. Père Jacques Laminne of Louvain, Professor of Dogmatic Theology. He was much interested in my husband, and had written an article about him in a Belgian Review. The war has for a time caused our correspondence to cease. Professor Laminne was much interested also in *ma jeune theologienne* and in her entrance on the Religious Life. I trust he may some day read this record of her life.

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Will you give my love specially to people like Auntie Anne and Uncle Will; and tell the latter I am not in the least morbid yet. I will send back the French letter <sup>1</sup> when I've shown it to the Novice Mistress; perhaps she will take it to the Mother. I don't know when I shall have the chance. You can't go rushing after these exalted people. I see a good deal of the Novice Mistress though—she is so kind. She asks tenderly for you. I believe one or other would love to get a letter from you.

Yesterday, washing up in the pantry I nearly used as a dish-cloth the Rev. Mother's "serviette," as the horrified girl who snatched it from me, called it. This caused amusement.

[To a friend.]

*January 31, 1908.*

DEAREST —,

Thank you *so* much for your letter. It is quite delightful to get letters: but, as you suggest, it *will* be very difficult to answer them as time goes on; so I can hardly expect my friends to go on with what will necessarily be a one-sided correspondence! I am to be made a Postulant this evening at 7.30; so I shall be less free than I have been hitherto: and after I am a Novice (I hope in three months' time) I shall only be allowed to use two stamps a week! The only thing, my dear, is for you to come down here and see me later on. Why not come to the July Retreat? Then you would see — at its best. I am very happy indeed so far. I have been in the Novitiate since I came—that means that though technically only a "visitor," I have been with the Novices and Postulants and been treated more or less

<sup>1</sup> From Père Laminne.

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like a Postulant, and looked after by the Novice Mistress. Everybody is as kind as possible. The atmosphere is one of real *love*—not sentimental, but cordial and warm—of busyness and of self-discipline. There are a good many silent times: *e. g.* all meals; between 9 and 12; and 3 to 4.30.

Don't be unhappy, my dear. What is it that troubles you? I hear you were a great success at S. M. M. It always takes one a little time to know how long one's lesson will last out!<sup>1</sup> Of course I do not forget you in my prayers. If things don't seem easy now, never mind. *He* did not have a very easy time; and the disciple is not above his Lord.

Your loving—  
FRITZ.

I am still Miss R. for three months!  
Love to your mother. Your clock is *most* useful.<sup>2</sup>

[After being made a Postulant.]

*February 5, 1908.*

You can't think how delightful it is to feel one belongs now.

I hope you enjoyed the Talbots<sup>3</sup> yesterday. I thought of you just arrived there—as I was thinking of bed! How I wish I had been there when Mr. G. H. was;<sup>4</sup> for I am sure you answered him quite wrong! Instead of saying "I hope so"—you ought to have said—"Indeed I hope not, what a terrible

<sup>1</sup> At the Sunday School in preparation for the Catechism.

<sup>2</sup> An alarm clock.

<sup>3</sup> A dinner at Bishop's House, Kennington.

<sup>4</sup> A clergyman who had asked me if vestments were to be authorised.

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idea" (which would have taken the wind out of his sails), "as if they were not already authorised," you could have added *sotto voce*. I'm afraid you are not quite *sound* about the *principles* we stand on! We don't want anybody to do anything—just to leave us where we are. Our position is sure. In time we hope people will come to see that. But if vestments are "authorised" now, that will imply that we have never done anything than follow our own inclination hitherto. Ask the Vicar if this is not right.

Many thanks for the cutting from *The Guardian* which I shall read with much interest. It is a great comfort to hear a little public news.

People are all talking round the table, so it is very difficult to write. The head Novice is such a dear and so amusing and so nice and pretty and bright.

February 6, 1908.

I am so glad you enjoyed the Talbots—it sounds very nice. To-day I spent a good deal of time doing sums—accounts for the whole Penitentiary. Tell R. E. G. this—it is well he wasn't me for that time. How delightful about Norman<sup>1</sup>—I am so glad. I suppose it is really rather "awbaw" this time.

I don't think I shall chuck *this*—you wouldn't want me to, would you? I don't say that I shall not be tempted to. I believe that is almost a universal experience.

February 9, 1908.

The snowdrops are beginning to come out here. It is so nice to think the spring is coming. I met the Rev. Mother in the garden the other day—the first

<sup>1</sup> An Eton prize.

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time I have seen her to speak to since the first day. She was very kind and nice and remarked that we (two other Postulants were with me) hadn't run away yet, and wanted to know if we were very miserable; was sorry she hadn't seen more of us, but she had been so busy; and the only way she could was for us to do something very bad: then we'd be sent to her!

February 11, 1908.

I shall be able to get out for a walk to-day I expect, which has not been possible lately, though I can nearly always get out into the garden for a bit. I am so very sorry about Mrs. Scharlieb.<sup>1</sup> I do hope she is better now. She is such a dear.

How amusing about Mrs. P.<sup>2</sup> What did you tell her that I do? Because I should not think any of the things would appeal to her any more than putting out pails would!

By the way what has happened really about the Bishops and Vestments? I have only so far heard through Mr. G. H.'s lips; and Jack alluded to it in a letter. Have they all signed? And what do the papers say? And what effect has it on anything? Many thanks for the prompt sending on *Notes on the Faith*. I do swear by that, the *Christian's Manual* and the *Christian's Handy Book of Prayer*.

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

February 13, 1908.

MY DEAREST ALEX,

I have been wanting to write to you for ages—ever since I came; but it is difficult to get any

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Herbert Scharlieb—now Mrs. Herbert Shirley. She had been in great danger.

<sup>2</sup> A lady who objected to Fritz's entering on the Religious Life.

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time for writing letters: one has to put anything of that kind into odd five minutes's, which are liable to interruption. I have so far written every day to Mother, so that takes up a little time. So I hope you will forgive me and not think it is really neglect. I foresee that very few letters will be possible as time goes on. Only don't forget that letters are a *great* joy if ever you have any time you don't know what to do with (that isn't often, I know).

This is a very nice place, Alex. I do hope you will some day be able to come and see it. I think it would interest you very much. I am so happy here, except for occasional outbursts of home-sickness, which is very like sea-sickness in some ways. I have never had it before. Everybody is so kind and cordial; that is the *atmosphere* of the place—kindness and love—only not in the sentimental sense at all. I am very busy indeed. . . .

The work done among these girls is quite marvellous. They have all gone very wrong indeed, you know, and have been used to wild undisciplined lives; and many of them get converted here and turn into really good pious women. . . . I like all the Novices, and the few Sisters I see, very much indeed. I am in the Novices' sitting-room and do everything with them. It is a little like being back at school—there are many restrictions, of course, and rules; and one has to ask leave of the Mistress before doing quite ordinary things; and she regulates one's day for one, and sees that one hasn't too much work and gets enough time for one's prayers, and for getting out.

They feed you excellently here, and give you plenty of sleep in very comfy beds. One of the ideas is, that as much work is expected of everybody

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they must have enough food and rest. Everybody is absolutely natural and human; there are plenty of jokes and fun in talking-times. All meals are silent; and there is silence daily (except on Sundays) between 9 and 12, and 3 and 4. The days are beginning to go very fast indeed. The music in Chapel is a great joy to me. . . . We all practise the music because we are all the choir. It sounds very nice and we have beautiful services.

Write again soon. Love to all, from—

FRITZ.

*February 16, 1908.*

Do tell me *what* wrong things dear Mrs. — said! <sup>1</sup> The Miss — letter is very characteristic; it does not express well what she means—which is sympathy for you! I send her nice little secretary's, which expresses Miss —'s views much better. And she often has mixed feelings; disapproval and yet thinking a thing "grand" as she says! She is rather a dear.

I am *very* happy indeed, and feel more and more sure it was right to come.

*February 18, 1908.*

A little line before Vespers if I can get it in. Tell P. her clock is in great request with people who are going to do early work and have to wake at 5.30. I have to lend it right and left. It goes most beautifully and wakes me every morning when I haven't lent it. I believe it will be pronounced too beautiful for me to keep later on! I wonder how Gerry and Philip are getting on. I was much amused by your

<sup>1</sup> About the Religious Life.

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account of D. W.<sup>1</sup> I wish I had been there—I would have smoked much. I don't miss smoking a bit by the way. It doesn't occur to me here—there wouldn't be any time or place for it, and one hasn't time to think of it.

Vespers bell has gone and I ought to go. You must never miss an Office without leave. Mr. Waterhouse's <sup>2</sup> letter is really charming—the nicest letter I have ever seen, I think. What a dear he must be. It is nice that there are such laymen.

I will send back P. W.'s letter to-morrow. I had a *killing* letter (not cheeky at all) from C.<sup>3</sup> begging me not to stay here! Don't tell him I told you—it is a very nice letter.

February 23, 1908.

The girls here are very interesting—I have the communicants twice a week and they are very nice to teach indeed. They are so *keen*; and some have considerable capacity for taking in religious ideas. One (not one of these) who is being prepared for Confirmation, the same one I told you of before, heard Mass for the first time; and afterwards said to another girl: "I knew there would be angels there, but I never expected to *see* them."

You should have seen me the other evening. I was asked to "take the North Wing" for the person who really does it and knows the ways. That means being on the landing while five girls are putting baths and hot water into all the rooms. But the real North Wing person has charge of the linen, etc.,

<sup>1</sup> A young friend who expressed much horror on being asked if she smoked.

<sup>2</sup> Paul Waterhouse, Esq., the eminent architect.

<sup>3</sup> A *protégé* of Ethel's.



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for all those rooms. As I was marshalling the girls up, I met the Housekeeping Sister. She just said as she passed—"Make up a bed in D—, dear: a Sister has just arrived." I didn't know where the sheets, etc., were! However, it got done in the end. That's the sort of thing that happens!

Now that five Postulants are being removed to a higher sphere, we five who are left are much more conspicuous. I had to walk out of Chapel alone the other evening: none of my set were there and the other five being in Retreat stayed in their stalls. I felt so lonely and made a bungle, leading out at the wrong door. The Novices all went the right way, and when we got back into this room, they all said, "Poor little lonely Postulant."

February 25, 1908.

So glad you are so "awbaw"<sup>1</sup>—that is very nice. I ought not to be writing to you at all now—but if I don't I can't get it in to-day! It has been a very busy one. I had early work to start with, then breakfast, then at 8.15 the Clothing and Mass which I was lucky enough to get into. Such a *beautiful* service it is. I don't think I will describe it *too* closely! A lovely Mass afterwards. It is so nice to see plain people converted into very nice-looking ones. They do it *in* the Service, you know. The ugly Postulants go out, and we sing Gradual Psalms till they return beautiful. It is very nice to see Novice — once more. She is so happy.

After Mass till now I have not had a minute I could call my own, and as I say I ought not to be

<sup>1</sup> I think this refers to my exalted position on the Councils of the Pan-Anglican Congress of 1908.

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doing this now. When I say “not a minute to myself”—I mean leisure time, not prayer time.

I am *so* glad to hear Mrs. Scharlieb is better.

March 1, 1908.

Give my love to the boys. I should like to have gone to *Hamlet* with them, such is my lack of the grace of detachment. There is a fearful hubbub going on in this room—it is very difficult to write. On Sundays the silence time is not kept. All the newly made Novices are being bullied (kindly) on various mistakes they have made. And one of the older ones has just said to me, “I hope you are listening to this and picking up hints.” So it is not very easy to write.

March 4, 1908.

I like your letter in *The Guardian*<sup>1</sup> very much indeed. I am very well indeed really. I am being spoilt as to Lenten asceticism—being made to eat an egg at breakfast and meat at supper daily: so you see how I am taken care of! Auntie wrote asking about Lent and saying she knew a nun who died in Holy Week of fasting in Lent. I wrote and told her there was no fear of that here.

I don't think I should care at all to discuss these and kindred subjects with Mrs. P. and M.<sup>2</sup> How can they understand? But you could say once and for all that you were quite as happy (if not more so) than Mrs. P. herself. I never can see why people should condole so much more about this kind of thing than about marriage.

<sup>1</sup> On foreign mission work.

<sup>2</sup> Two friends who could not understand Ethel's point of view or mine.

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March 12, 1908.

How very awbaw you must have felt.<sup>1</sup> But I don't think it would be very frightening to speak before the Archbishop; he is so kind—it is only the *idea* of it. I have just come out of Chapel from hearing a very nice address by Father Maxwell.

It is so difficult to write—everybody talking and laughing all round. There are plenty of jokes here in talking hours—it is great fun, but it makes letter-writing rather difficult. I wonder how little Jack is getting on—feeling rather nervous, I should think. I do feel interested in that—it is quite an occasion, isn't it? <sup>2</sup>

Is F. W. Bishop of Zanzibar? I do so want to hear.

March 18, 1908.

I had a perfectly glorious walk, nearly lost my way, but not quite: there was a glorious view. I had no idea before how lovely the country is in very early spring. I did enjoy it and feel so jolly after it. The air and the sun together were most exhilarating. I got back at exactly 4.30, and as I must have walked seven miles or so this was quite good.

We have just been having a sermon at Evensong—such a nice one.

March 15, 1908.

I think I forgot to tell you that there is continual intercession during Lent, all through the day. Every one has her turn of half an hour; and there are always two at a time, in case one is prevented. My time

<sup>1</sup> An allusion to my reading a paper at Lambeth Palace at a meeting. The Archbishop presided and was kind, as he always is.

<sup>2</sup> A speech at the Union, I think.

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is 1.30 to 2—rather a sleepy time, immediately after dinner. Suggested heads are given to us—like Sursum Corda, only not quite according to the same days.

It is nice to think of Jack at the Pusey House to-day.

I can't keep pace with your "pangling" at all. Won't you feel rather flat when June has come and gone? I like R.E.G.'s letter to you; only explain to him that "aw" is not spelt "awe." An A.R.F.<sup>1</sup> must know this.

Dyce enclosed me one of the placards with our new Low Church ways upon it!<sup>2</sup> Don't forget to tell me about St. Andrews.<sup>3</sup> We fervently gave thanks for the appointment at Mass this morning, without knowing why!

*March 21, 1908.*

One sometimes has rather a boxed-up feeling here, like a bird with its wings clipped—you feel so powerless. That will be all right when once everything outside is really settled one way or the other.

A Sister has just been in to tell me to go to the bank for her and to get out £20. I wish I could make off with it and come home!!<sup>4</sup>

It will be nice to get a little extra outing—the sun is so lovely. I must go and do this now.

I do love you and — so much.

<sup>1</sup> Associate of the Romanes Family. Ethel founded this Association, which was composed of friends who had stayed more than once at Pitcalzean.

<sup>2</sup> At St. Mary Magdalene's. This is a joke. She means Mission Services.

<sup>3</sup> The successor of Bishop Wilkinson.

<sup>4</sup> I have inserted this one letter in which she ever alluded to home-sickness and a wish to "come home," for it may perhaps show that even to the most decided, the most apparently joyous, dark hours must come.

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*March 23, 1908.*

So many thanks for your letter. You have no idea how I look out for letters. I am a byword here, by the way, as to letters! I certainly get my share. Do you know—my Clothing will really be so very soon after Easter—or so it appears—that it seems almost as if it would be best to make that the time for your coming—what do you think? There will be my Retreat before it which I should think would be at the very beginning of May, and April is a short month; and Easter Day is April 19th, isn't it? How near it all is getting.

Yes, I think you and I would both feel we had missed something if I came home again now, shouldn't we? It is worth the pain. Besides we never expected not to have pain—that would be a very bad reason for coming home again! I think it is really all right and the Novice Mistress thinks so too. They all have the same experience here; and all their relations do too. Besides, how happy we are, aren't we?

If my saying I love you so much makes you so happy I herewith say it again. Evensong—oh dear—how the bells go here!

You would be so amused to see us at the (Plain) Song practice with Sister —.

*March 26, 1908.*

I have just been covering two rooms with dust-sheets for the sweep; and uncovering one of them again after his departure, and getting very sooty in consequence; and now there is a short interval before Sext. The Mistress spoke yesterday as if the Clothing would very likely indeed be on May 6th. Isn't that nice and near? Everybody says it is so much nicer to be a Novice than a Postulant. Will you tell Dyce

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and R.E.G. this, and put it down in the latter's notebook for him? I suppose all the boys will be back at their scholastic establishments. I suppose any number of brothers could come if they were lodged in the town. I am afraid Jack could hardly get out for it unless he were *very* energetic—it is at 8.15; but it *would* be a joy to have him. You and Dyce and Jack and R.E.G. would be perfect. However it is a little soon to be making such plans. It is nice if it is really to be on one of St. John's feasts.

I forgot to answer you about Mrs. X. and M. Certainly I think I am better off here than I would be boxed-up in a flat with Mr. —! I dreamt one night that both Mrs. X. and M. believed at last what you said about my being so happy here; so they thought they would try it too, and came and were Postulants and sat side by side in Chapel! My dream ended before anything happened; but they both curtsied very nicely to the Altar.

April 3, 1908.

Now I must go into Chapel—and after that I have a class of *very* intelligent, very well-instructed communicants; I am going to give them *Moberly*<sup>1</sup>—made easy.

April 5, 1908.

All your enclosures are most interesting. Please congratulate the boys on their various feats. Their places in the book look excellent, but as usual I don't understand it! Norman's place looks better than his marks. I like his poem and the *Sign* article very much indeed. I wish I could see them—the boys, I mean.

<sup>1</sup> *Atonement and Personality*, a book to which she and I were much devoted.

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April 7, 1908.

I do want you all to be at my Clothing—you and Dyce and R. E. G. and as many boys as possible. Will you tell as many as you can of the right kind of people about the day—P. N. W. Richard,<sup>1</sup> W. B. T., etc? Oh, isn't it lovely to think of!

I keep forgetting to say of course I want to have the new book. I had no idea it was to be out so soon. Also how exciting, too, about the 6th edition<sup>2</sup>—that is splendid. About a week ago when I was sitting in charge with some girls the door opened, and who should come in but—the Rev. Mother General—an almost unheard-of thing; she came to ask the exact title of *Port Royal*; <sup>3</sup> so was evidently thinking of buying it for the Community. I think I ought to have my copy here.

How jolly that you are coming to the Retreat in July. I hope I shall still be here. There is a pleasing uncertainty about where one will be from week to week!

The S. M. M. Magazine and the expedition to the Zoo made me very homesick! Did you ride on the elephant? I suppose not, as I wasn't there.

April 27, 1908.

Just a line on my last *normal* day as Miss R.! I did my last bit of shopping this afternoon. It felt so funny. It will be Evensong in a minute and then our Retreat begins. . . .

Bring the boys up to see Mother when you arrive. I am sure she would like to see them.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Richard Rackham, C.R., died 1912. His *Commentary on the Acts* is well known.

<sup>2</sup> Of the *Life* of my husband.

<sup>3</sup> My book on Port Royal.

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This is very sad about dear Dr. Browne.<sup>1</sup> S.M.M. will not be the same without him. I always liked him. And he was very affectionate, and how he did love S.M.M.<sup>2</sup>

He was happier than W. H. H. J. in having the Last Sacraments.

The "Clothing" took place on the Feast of SS. Philip and John. The night before as I was going to my "cell" something flung itself on me and hugged me. This was Fritz. The next morning, after the service and a hasty breakfast, she came out into the garden to us, radiant, joyous, and full of fun. I stayed on for a few days and realised, perhaps for the first time, the reality of the separation which the Religious Life entails.

May 17, 1908.

DEAREST MOTHERS, *i. e.* GRANNY AND MOTHER SIEGEL,—Many thanks for your letter. I do so enjoy all your news. I am glad "pangling" was nice, and Ventnor.

The garden here is too glorious to describe—in one way I wish the Clothing had been a little later on, then you would have seen all the flowers and cherry blossom which have burst out since the beginning of the month. I never really have been much in the English country at this time of year, and did not realise how lovely it was.

The Novice Mistress asked me whether I felt terribly flat after "Granny" went away; but I could truthfully say—no, not so very. Because I

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Oswald Browne, a beloved physician and a devoted friend of the U.M.C.A.

<sup>2</sup> He was churchwarden at St. Mary Magdalene's.



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felt as if I had had such a very nice feast of you and as if that would last for some time. Did you feel like that? Of course, the boys and R. E. G. went rather too soon, but still I did have a lovely time on that Friday.

Is Jack going round the world? I am almost as anxious as Hector<sup>1</sup> to know! Very much love to both of you—a kiss for Granny.

May 24, 1908.

Many thanks for the books which are greatly appreciated not only by me. The Mistress has borne away *Ellice Hopkins's Life*; the senior Novice *Bishop Mylne*; and I am left with the *Church Quarterly* upon which Novice X. has cast greedy eyes! It will be very nice if you continue to supply us with books. The Sisters, specially people like the N. M. and M. X. do appreciate them and so do many of the Novices. The *Church Quarterly* would be very nice to have because it would keep one up to things that are being thought about.

May 31, 1908.

I don't believe I ever sent my love to the Inghams, but I hope you gave it to them all. I am sure dear Uncle Will does not at all approve of my being here. I wish Auntie Anne would come sometime—I am sure she would be charmed, and they would all be charmed with her, wouldn't they? She had better come to a Retreat here some time.

Thank you so much for the chocolates; the Noviciate does appreciate chocolates; we had them on Ascension Day, and again on Saturday. Phyllis's

<sup>1</sup> Hector Munro-Fergusson, Esq., a great friend of Jack's.

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chocs mostly went to the girls. We had a holiday for them on Ascension Day. These festivals are not exactly holidays for us, as the girls have to be kept amused and good for so long. We gave them a kind of play tea out in the recreation ground first—then played games all the afternoon; and they skipped and swung and see-sawed; and then had a proper tea indoors with nice things to eat, and the Sisters to wait on them—this last gives them the greatest joy!

*June 10, 1908.*

I dreamt last night that it was the Eton and Harrow and that I had gone to Lord's, and when there realised it was not quite the place for a nun and vainly tried to find a secluded spot. Lord's was just like Eton on the 4th of June, in fact it was a mixture of the 4th and the Eton and Harrow; and I felt very conspicuous. When do the boys get their leave? They and Jack seem to have had a very jolly time on the real 4th.

I couldn't get off a letter on Sunday because I had all three dear boys <sup>1</sup> here most of the day. It was so delicious.

I had not realised—that the Lecture <sup>2</sup>—was to be yesterday, and I am so glad to have it to-day. Dear Dr. Holland, how nice and appropriate of him to lecture on Optimism—I haven't read it yet but it looks very brilliant. I see he thinks Origen was optimistic to a fault. How about H.S.H.? He ends up very nicely, doesn't he? Don't you think he's far the nicest lecturer we've had yet? <sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Two at Eton and one at Oxford.

<sup>2</sup> The Romanes Lecture, 1908.

<sup>3</sup> Yes, I agreed.

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June 17, 1908.

By the way, if I am to be a school sister next term (which doesn't seem to be quite settled) my Rest will not be in October (which will be in the middle of the term)—but almost certainly in August. What is going to happen in August? If you and the boys and I are all together somewhere during their holidays it would be very jolly, wouldn't it? One good thing about it would be that I should see more of the boys. Will you tell R.E.G. this that he may not fix up his dates too quickly and firmly? What a bore, I am, I am afraid, with my dates; but I *do* want to have something of him and of Dyce if only it is possible during my "leave"; and as he and you all have always spoilt me perhaps you will continue to do so! I will let you know definitely as soon as possible. Mother and the Mistress were talking me over on Friday—so Mother herself told me—she popped her head out of the window as I passed and we had quite a long conversation. She says she wants to penetrate Harley House, and as S.E.G. tells me it is now a Branch House of the Community, no doubt she will. At the end of the conversation she said—"What a nice long talk we have had—the best since your clothing. I wish we could have one oftener. I wish you would do something outrageously bad, then we should have to. You can do *anything* you like . . . perhaps not *swearing*." So I suggested smoking a cigarette, which she said would do splendidly. Isn't she a dear? I like her more and more. She says she very much approves of you and asked if I did. I said I thought you were quite satisfactory. S.E.G. did so much like your speech, and she says somebody came up and said you were the only one who had treated it from a

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sacramental point of view.<sup>1</sup> I am *much* looking forward to hearing all about the Lecture—it must have been very nice having Dr. Holland. I have begun it and like it immensely. I hope he enjoyed himself. I should like to hear a little of what very secular people and journals thought of it—whether much notice is taken, etc.

I have just been giving a class on the subject for the day to the Communicants: and had rather dreaded it, thinking the subject so difficult and abstract for them. But I am quite astonished by three or four of the girls. This is not the first time that I have noted remarkable spiritual capacity in them.<sup>2</sup> They take Moberly's and Illingworth's ideas and illustrations out of my mouth before I have time to utter them! Hooting at the idea of *persons* being separate and so on. It is rather wonderful.

### [Beginning of Pan-Anglican Congress.]

*Feast of Corpus Christi, 1908.*

Am I not horrid, but this is the only week when I am not home-sick!! I don't know why it is but I don't feel drawn to the P.A. though I expect there will be lots of interesting things. I agree with the man who writes in the Treasury that it would be nicer if it were a Prayer Congress. The Novice Mistress has just had a wire from Jack saying—"If I come over this evening can I see Novice Etheldred?" Isn't he amusing—so like him to wire to her. I only hope he will not come too late. It will be delightful to see him.

<sup>1</sup> At a Conference on Rescue Work.

<sup>2</sup> She often remarked on this spiritual capacity in her girls.

## The Story of an English Sister

Give my best love to W.B.T.,<sup>1</sup> who lunches with you to-morrow, doesn't he?—and to Miss Haldane.

*Friday.*—Jack came last evening about 5.45 bringing Pips<sup>2</sup> in a motor! We had a delightful hour in the garden and I showed them the Chapel. The Mistress came out and walked in the garden with us for a little while. I knew Jack would win her heart, as he did; and she tells me to-day she thinks him *delightful*, so easy to talk to! We met the Mother in the garden, who expressed great astonishment at seeing *two* Jacks and hoped the other was nice. “How long have you known him?” she asked me, and when I said “As long as Jack has been at Oxford”—she said “That doesn't go very far.” “Ah, but it goes deep though,” said quick-witted Jack, and everybody laughed and Pips was accepted. I had felt a little afraid when I first saw him with Jack, as I did not know what the rule was about receiving young men! They brought me some chocolates, the dears. Jack is a very nice show brother, because he gets on with everybody, Mothers Superior included; and behaved as if he were quite at home in Convents and Nunneries.

I have read the Lecture<sup>3</sup>—how delightful it is—and have passed it on to Mother. Oh, by the way, I got the present from the Bishop of Birmingham<sup>4</sup> all right the other day from London. How sweet of him! I don't think you told me it was coming, so I was very surprised as well as delighted. I hope he is getting better.

We appreciated the *Daily Guardian*—can we have some more? The Sisters like the pictures! We had it at our Novices' recreation. We were all struck by

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. B. Trevelyan.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Holsapple.

<sup>3</sup> The Romanes Lecture on the Optimism of Bishop Butler.

<sup>4</sup> Bishop Gore, who had been ill.

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the climax to the intercession "the whole *Anglican* Communion"—in Westminster Abbey: no word about the Church Catholic! Did the Pan-Anglican never have any big Eucharist at all from beginning to end? It is very sad if they did not.

June 28, 1908.

There is not very much to relate . . . Mother and S. E. G. are going away together for their rest, and S. E. G. asked me to tell her of some nice books. I said for one *Father and Son*—isn't that what Mr. Gosse's book is called? I think it would suit them beautifully. And then I said *One Poor Scruple*, which neither of them have read. Do you think you could lend them that? What else do you recommend? I thought of *The Celestial Surgeon*.

I was much interested and amused in your accounts of the end of the "pangle."

July 15, 1908.

S. E. G. is most grateful for the books. She took Mr. Russell's to read in the train. I remembered with regret *The Benefactress*, and *Princess Priscilla's Fortnight*.

[Her "Rest" was a delightful time, only I foolishly allowed the prospect of parting to overshadow my own enjoyment.]

*In the Train going from a Branch House,*  
September 14, 1908.

So sorry to hear about your headaches—I do hope you will be all right for the Halifaxes;<sup>1</sup> that is delightful. It is very nice to be steering homewards again, though the Branch House people were dears—

<sup>1</sup> A visit to Hickleton.

## The Story of an English Sister

such charming Sisters, both of them. (Here came my first change—and as I got out of the train a working man, passing, touched his hat. A little while after he and his companion came up and he asked me in a most charming Irish brogue whether I was allowed to talk. So we had a little conversation of the most friendly character—he told me there were nuns in his town in S. Ireland; and that *everybody* in Ireland was Catholic; and then I said I was afraid there were a few Protestants still left in the North, whereat he twinkled and said, “Oh yes, a few.” Such dears they both were. They had both been to Mass the Sunday before, for one remarked to the other that there were nuns also in that place where they had been, for they had seen them in Church putting things away after Mass. We parted great friends after five minutes’ conversation.)

*September 20, 1908.*

There is really quite an amount to tell you, for I have not been able to write a letter since the one I wrote in the train. It has been a rush. At — I had 20 minutes to wait and to change stations; and there I saw Margery Aubrey Moore; and Miss Pearson<sup>1</sup> with another Settlement lady. Miss Pearson did not know me—it was so amusing. When I got here I had such nice warm welcomes—it is a lovely home to come back to.

I have five classes to teach a week—two to the Fifth Form on Henry V. which they are taking in some examination; one on Grammar to some little girls; one on Composition to the same form—and one on the Old Testament beginning at Amos to the Fourth Form. Besides that we are to have a coaching in

<sup>1</sup> Then Vice-Principal of Lady Margaret.

## Early Days of Community Life

teaching—each privately with Miss — five times a week; we are to attend three classes and three lectures a week; the subjects being History of Education, Psychology and Methodology (*i. e.* Practice of Teaching), and are to fill up the time reading these subjects, writing one essay a week and listening to other people's efforts in teaching. There are seven of us students—three novices and four seculars. The appalling thing of all is the teaching, because (1) Miss — is present listening and taking notes; and anybody else may be there too, from Novice—up to Sister—who is a genius at teaching. (2) They expect you to be able to teach anything under the sun and to have any amount of information at your fingers' ends—whereas I have nothing at all at my fingers' ends.<sup>1</sup>

The thing I most want is an annotated edition of Henry V., and any books about Shakspeare. And any books which would help about Amos and the following prophets. Of course there are books down at the school, but one never knows who may not be wanting them; and I can't find G. A. Smith anywhere.<sup>2</sup> I delivered my first lesson on Henry V. at a few hours' notice with Miss — and one of the Sisters sitting there. It was awful!! I had had a book lent me, so managed to say something. The criticisms after one's lessons are very interesting. Miss — said I should make a teacher, but must get out of some mannerisms—and that my manner sometimes became rather oppressed. I said, "I felt oppressed!"

To-day is such a nice free day; we school sisters are liable to be put into charges on Saturday and Sunday, but I have only had one to-day. Beatrice Paget is here; also Miss F. Trench, and I just said

<sup>1</sup> As usual, she always under-estimated herself.

<sup>2</sup> The *Commentary on Isaiah*.



## The Story of an English Sister

"How do you do?" She looks very beautiful. Beatrice tells me you will be at Cuddesdon for the wedding.<sup>1</sup> So you go straight to Hickleton from Scotland? How glad you will be to get into a Christian land.

*September 24, 1908.*

This work is very exciting and full. There are three classes and three lectures every week which we have to go to, all given by Miss — and all informal and quite interesting, especially psychology. Then once a fortnight we have lessons in drawing on the blackboard! You can fancy how bad I am at this. The blackboard seems to be the most important item in teaching. Our instructress is so clever and really will do a person like me good. We each of us have a blackboard and she makes us draw leaves, etc., very quickly with only a few lines. She herself draws anything so quickly and so well. Then there are these awful classes that one has to give and at which Miss — is present. At present I am quite paralysed with terror and my classes are very slow and dull and lifeless in consequence. Miss — is excellent at criticising—very kind too. One will get hardened to it in time. We have to write an essay every week. I have just finished mine on the — Method in Teaching. I didn't even know what that meant when I began! I said I did not approve of it, which is very heretical according to modern ideas. I expect your Bedale<sup>2</sup> friend was brought up on it. It only means you must never tell a child anything but he must find out everything for himself.

Think of me with pity on Tuesdays and Thursdays,

<sup>1</sup> Of Miss Freda Paget.

<sup>2</sup> A school of some note, where the newest methods in education prevailed.

## Early Days of Community Life

when I have two classes to give each day, and with rejoicings on Thursday afternoons at four, when there won't be another class to give till the following Tuesday.

*September 27, 1908.*

Your Sunday letter has not yet come, so I can't answer anything in it. I suppose you are going to Hickleton to-morrow—how nice that will be—then where?

This week we are going to begin "criticism classes," which paralyse one to think of even.

Please give my love to Lord Halifax if he will have it.

*October 1, 1908.*

Just back from school after a very busy day and find your long letter. What nice visits you seem to have had. I hope this will catch you at Auntie Anne's before you leave her. Give her and all of them my very dearest love.

At almost every class I give now somebody is present listening and criticising—taking notes: if not Miss —, one of the Sisters. Then every day I go to Miss — to be told all about the awful things I have done. There is so much to be learnt—all kinds of things you would never think of by the light of nature unless you were a really born genius at teaching, as e.g. Sister — is. I went to one of her classes the other day and have never been to anything more splendid from every point of view—spiritual, theological, intellectual and educational—it was wonderful—on the Life of Our Lord. She quoted Dubose.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Fritz admired the works of Professor Dubose, the eminent American theologian.

## The Story of an English Sister

There is going to be a real criticism class to-morrow (not of me happily !). One of the Novices is going to hold a levée at her divinity class—and all the students will be there and perhaps a lot of Sisters. They will all listen and take notes. Later there will be a meeting of them all—each will say what she thought the merits and defects of the class were; and at the end Miss — criticises their criticisms and sums up. Usually the poor victim is reduced to pulp at the end. I am not to have mine for a fortnight yet, as Miss — says I am still too full of stage fright. The lectures are really very interesting indeed, and a fruitful source of discussion. The training is most excellent from many points of view, and I am more and more in love with the school itself. On St. Michael's Day there was a half holiday and another novice and I were told to go out together after dinner for a long walk and take food with us and little office books to say Vespers out of—"and I hope you will have a very delightful day with the angels, dear"—so off we went. It was delicious—such air and such a glorious day. We fell in with many of our own children, who had all got a holiday and had gone with the other sisters and were having a lovely picnic—such jolly little creatures racing and tearing about all over the place. It was all very delightful and such views.

*October 4, 1908.*

What a nice ending to your visits—Malton is always a nice place, but especially when it is fine enough to go on those lovely expeditions. Now you are once more in the flat. When does Puck <sup>1</sup> come south to keep you company? I long to see him. This evening you will have R.E.G. to supper. Give him my love

<sup>1</sup> A pug.

## Early Days of Community Life

and thanks for his jolly letter; it is so nice to hear all about S.M.M.

Sister — (who is doing Mistress) is so genuinely frightened of Novice —'s and my learning—she told us so herself!—that she takes every opportunity of ejecting us from her classes. So yesterday instead of her class we went blackberrying—which reminds me—come here when you do come so as to have all Saturday here. So far I have had absolutely free Saturdays after 9 a.m.

Mother is away at the opening of a new House. I had quite a nice talk with her last Sunday—she is a dear.

I wish Auntie Anne and Uncle Bill could know how nice it is here—and other people too. It is such a pity they don't. They couldn't not like it if they knew. But I know exactly the sort of thing they think it is, don't you?

Saturdays and Sundays are such joys now—such rest and peace after the horrors<sup>1</sup> of the week. I get a glimpse of the girls too, having early work always on Saturday now in the laundry; and one charge on Sunday. Now I am going in to eat the blackberries we picked yesterday and a piece of the cake which I missed at the Profession.

October 8, 1908.

Have you seen *Punch* for Sept. 23rd? There is a joke with our name in it: a good one. The boys would no doubt like to see it. Then didn't you go to Freda Paget's wedding, or is it next Tuesday? I am writing at school in an interval. In an hour or so I have to give two lessons one after the other, and then fly off to St. — to hear one of our students

<sup>1</sup> This is a playful bit of hyperbole.

## The Story of an English Sister

give a lesson at which we are all to take notes and criticise—then give our verdict afterwards. Many thanks for many books—G. A. Smith is the only one I have not got. I am most grateful for Kirkpatrick.

You would have been amused last evening to see me arrested in the midst of my clearing the supper-table, with numberless jugs, etc., in my hand, by Sister —, who attacked me on the subject of the Kenosis. She had been struck by something Mr. — (who is rather go ahead, I think) had said, and she is so quick she pounced on it directly and saw the bearing of the question; so she wanted to know about it. I referred her to Bp. Gore's *Dissertations*. I think she would like some things in Frank Weston's book.<sup>1</sup>

Very much love. I feel *very* homesick to-day. I had such a nice letter from Miss Wordsworth, to whom I had written. I shall be thinking of you there at F. W.'s Consecration.

October 15, 1908.

I don't see why Miss Dove should not be Mayor if they want her to be.<sup>2</sup> She has been very public-spirited at Wycombe; and it is in her case I suppose only a sort of honorary title, isn't it? I don't exactly know what the duties of a Mayor are though.

How Norman will enjoy Elgar. Make Phyllis sing "Corals"<sup>3</sup> to him.

[To me : after a Retreat.]

October 25, 1908.

You will be amused to hear that the girls were much interested in all your belongings, particularly in the

<sup>1</sup> *The One Christ*, by Bishop Weston.

<sup>2</sup> Miss Dove was elected Mayor of Wycombe.

<sup>3</sup> A lovely song of Sir Edward Elgar's, "Where Corals Lie."

## Early Days of Community Life

miniature; and two of them had a quarrel as to whether it was a picture of me or of my sister.'

October 28, 1908.

Many thanks for your budget. How delightful it is about our Lecture—Mr. Balfour is nicer than Roosevelt,<sup>1</sup> I think; but both *most* interesting.

November 4, 1908.

Very many thanks for Norman's Sonnet, which is quite charming, except that the construction of the last lines is not quite clear—another verb wanted somehow.

Do you think you could send a cheap paper copy of Sheridan's *The Critic*? I have offered to help the girls get up a play. The usual mistress who does that is ill and no one else seems to have any idea of theatricals; and yet they are all most disappointed at not having a play. I did get up the *Critic* once at Lady Margaret Hall and it was a success—it is killingly amusing.

November 8, 1908.

So many thanks for *the* book<sup>2</sup>—I do think it looks quite delightful—it is so enthusiastic and living, that's why, and the pictures are a great feature. And Miss Wordsworth at the end is so delicious. I am sure Miss Yonge-lovers will be very grateful. I have not read much of it yet, but what I have makes me wish I had read more of Miss Yonge!

Many thanks also for the *Critic*—I have left it to be inspected by Sister. I so hope she will approve.

<sup>1</sup> The Right Hon. A. J. Balfour had kindly consented to give the Romanes Lecture in 1909.

<sup>2</sup> *Charlotte Yonge—an Appreciation.*

## The Story of an English Sister

I expect we shall have to leave the oaths out. My criticism lesson is fixed for Friday week, and probably the great Miss — will be at it as well, to pile on the agony. However, the only thing is not to think about it beforehand at all. What with that and the *Critic* this next week or so will be rather exciting. What a nice letter from Mr. Galton.<sup>1</sup> We come across him sometimes in our psychology.

What a curious thing about F. George!<sup>2</sup> We prayed fervently for him at Mass on All Souls Day! It seems to have been so long in being rectified. How odd he will feel when he reads his own obituary notices!

November 11, 1908.

It is very sad about the *Critic*. Sister likes it in itself immensely, but thinks the audience would not appreciate it. I see what she means, though I do not agree. Do you think you could send me Mrs. Hugh Bell's book<sup>3</sup>—all four copies? I promise to preserve them and send them back. I should be so grateful, as I think I could get up one of those for the children, and we have not too much time now. They are such delightful plays that I think Sister will be satisfied.

This week has been rather disorganised because a Miss — who used to teach at Exeter High School, famous for its language work, has been over to the school to talk about new methods and to give specimen classes in French; we students had to go to these last and listen. I never heard anything so charming.

<sup>1</sup> Francis Galton, Esq., F.R.S.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. F. George, U.M.C.A. He was supposed to have died in the summer of 1908.

<sup>3</sup> *Fairy Tale Plays*, by Mrs. Hugh Bell, now Lady Bell.

## Early Days of Community Life

One longed to see everybody taught in this way. Phonetics was a great feature, and I think she has converted us all to that. She only gave a few lessons, but even in the time we could hear the children's accent getting quite French. How one longed to be able to teach like her. She told a little story in beautiful French in one class—rather slowly and repeating the sentences and with a great deal of action. One idea in this new method is for everything to be done in French—nothing is ever to be translated in English, so if a child does not understand a word it is explained in other words in French. When she had finished the story (which had a funny point to it at the end—most of the children laughed and showed they had understood) she asked questions—"Qui avait un cheval?" and they had to answer in a sentence—"Henri Quatre avait un cheval," etc., etc. It was a delightful lesson.

No letter to-day from you—this is very sad.

November 15, 1908.

What a delightful letter this is from Miss Bramston.<sup>1</sup> We began rehearsing the play yesterday afternoon as Sister had sent for and received a copy of Mrs. Bell's book. We have fixed on *Ali Baba*. We shall have a rehearsal every day from 1.30 to 2.30. The girls are very keen, which is the chief thing.

My very best love to everybody including Puck. I do hope it will be fine for the Oxford expedition. By the way, do not begin misspelling your own daughter's name, Granny, in your dotage. My patron

<sup>1</sup> About my book on Miss Yonge. Miss Bramston wrote many stories herself, which were appreciated by readers of *The Monthly Packet*.



## The Story of an English Sister

saint is not *Ethelred* the Unready. I see it is wrong in the book too !

November 18, 1908.

How interesting this is about the Commission—many thanks for sending it.<sup>1</sup> Also about America.<sup>2</sup> I wonder about when it will be. Dear old Jack—I hope he is a nice Bishop, who is it ?<sup>3</sup> This training of mine leads one to think about educational methods—*perhaps* Oxford is not the place for everybody. What a lot of individuality Jack has, though, to think all this out for himself. I think of Jack that though he may not be good at Latin and Greek, he is nevertheless a very well educated person or at all events on the road to being so, because his personality is developing, which is the chief thing, I suppose. Perhaps it would be better not to mention it to him (!), but all the educationalist philosophers since the Renaissance agree with his views on education (!!), which he has sometimes expressed. Australia is a horrid long way off.

I had to give a grammar lesson this morning in front of an inspector, Professor — from London University. He didn't do anything. It's a great thing not to know beforehand all the horrors to which you will be exposed, when taking any step. If some one had told me last 18th November that that was what I should be doing that day year—! Even worse is the torture provided for Friday. I shall be very glad when this week is over. I think the play will go very well. The girls like it immensely.

<sup>1</sup> On Ritual.

<sup>2</sup> I had been invited to lecture in America.

<sup>3</sup> Jack had half decided to go out to Australia to work under the Bishop of North Queensland.

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November 22, 1908.

The play is proceeding—I am beginning to feel rather nervous about it as all responsibility lies on me, and you never quite know with Sisters what will please! You see, every one comes to look on—it is really quite a grand affair. As far as the acting goes I think it will be all right if only the children will learn their parts. I find I can teach people to act though I can't act myself, which is rather an anomaly and sounds rather incredible; but I expect it is the result of much theatre-going. But I feel anxious about the scenery, etc. One ought to be on the spot all day long. Also when the children are free to rehearse I am often not, and vice versa. Still we've got a few more days: it's to be on Thursday. Burn more candles for that! <sup>1</sup> It is so funny to be doing *Ali Baba* again—I can hear our company's voices—Francis Scott <sup>2</sup> saying, "Bags, strange bags"; and Jack (Morgiana), "We should all have been murdered." Do you remember Abdullah?

December, 1908.

I believe Christmas here is lovely—you know we have midnight Mass. However, I shall be able to describe all that when I come home for a whole week. It is very nearly time for Evensong, because I was hurried off to sing Cowley Carols—they are lovely—we are having that beautiful rather long one, about letting His little pillow be faith and His crib charity.<sup>3</sup> I forget what it is called, but we liked it so last year.

Couldn't we have something edifyingly religious at our Christmas Tree? I wish we could somehow have a little crèche or something; anyhow some

<sup>1</sup> Another family saying.

<sup>2</sup> Alex's brother.

<sup>3</sup> No. 21 of Cowley Carol Book. We sang it frequently at Pitcalzean.

## The Story of an English Sister

carols—ostensibly for the sake of the poor children, but also really for the rich. I have even a vision of a very short but effective mystery play (!!). The Three Kings and St. Joseph we have in stock already.

December 23, 1908.

A very happy Christmas—I am sure you will have one, it sounds delicious, and I am so glad you are having our weather—isn't it delightful? I have been trying to write a little note to everybody at home besides a good many letters to novices at Branch Houses—all in between times—the consequence is that all the letters suffer somewhat, I am afraid. There is not much to relate however. This brings you any amount of love and kisses—we shall be together on Xmas morning—we shall as it happens be worshipping simultaneously.

*After Dinner.*—Murray's *Dictionary* has just arrived. Thank you *so* much, and please thank the brothers and sister—it looks delightful and will be most useful, especially as we have only one vol. of Hastings, so can never find out about anything further on than G in the alphabet. The Mistress says that if ever I get professed the Sisters' Library will have to be enlarged as I get books at the rate of one a week! That reminds me—thank you so much for *Hugh*,<sup>1</sup> but I shall be bringing him back with me when I come, as he was not much approved of at headquarters. I think "The Lord of the World" set them against him! You can give him as a present to some one. As a matter of fact I don't think it *touches* "Eagerheart." I thought Sister X.'s criticism was good—that it made you think of the tinsel and paste virgins in R.C.

<sup>1</sup> A mystery play by Monsignor Benson. The family, who read his books greedily, always called him "Hugh."

## Early Days of Community Life

Churches. He relies so much on the clothes, doesn't he, and the copes. Some of the lines are very pretty though. Talking of lines, do get *A Pilgrim's Calendar*, by A. M. Newton, published by Frowde, 1s. Blackwell would send it. She is a sister of Mrs. Knox, and I have already very much admired some of her poetry in *The Spectator*. These poems are quite beautiful. Winnie has just sent them. The one on All SS. Day is lovely. I will bring it with me to show you if you don't get it before. N. would like them. Winnie says the Bishop of Birmingham<sup>1</sup> and Dr. Scott Holland like them so much. She is giving *Mr. Tonge*<sup>2</sup> to Mrs. Knox for Xmas. Would you send her the enclosed letter? I have to do this because we are only allowed three stamps each! This is a very stupid thing to send at Xmas—just an ordinary letter in return for the Murray; this is one of the joys we relinquish in this Life—the joy of giving presents—which one feels the loss of all the more when we get such nice ones given to us! But it brings you ever so much love. On Sunday I will write and tell you all we did on Xmas Day. This day fortnight we shall be saying "To-morrow!" Are N. and G. coming south with you?

[This was written in the Flat. She had come a day sooner than I expected her. Great was our laughter when I found her.]

January, 1909.

I can't come on Tuesday after all! Alack and alas! And I don't think there is the smallest chance of my

<sup>1</sup> Bishop Gore.

<sup>2</sup> I had written to Mr. Russell suggesting that Miss Yonge ought to be included in the *Leaders of the Church* Series. He replied: "Who is Mr. Tonge?" This became a family joke.

## The Story of an English Sister

getting up to town on any day after Tuesday until the blessed summer holidays come. I will explain more fully later on. Tell E. and A. The main reason of this is that I am coming on Monday instead, and *when you read this shall be already in the Flat*. Yes, I am really. Come and find me—I'm hiding. Cuck-ooo!

FRITZ.

January 28, 1909.

We had a very funny day yesterday. We are trying with difficulty to get in our 60 full school-days demanded by the Board of Education, so yesterday we all took one at the Elementary School. We spent from 9-12 and from 2-4 there, and it was highly instructive and amusing, but bitterly cold. I did feel sorry for the children, who are a remarkably poor-looking set—ill nourished and ill clothed; the thermometer was only 38, and I was awfully cold in spite of having heaps of clothes. The schools are Church schools, and there is a form of service. Quite a long service and liturgical too—the children sang part of Psalm 119 to a Gregorian tone! We were in the Girls' School. Then we all dispersed to listen to various classes. I went to quite a young class—they were being taught to say Morning and Evening Prayers, and saying their Creed with questions on it. Such little dears they were, with a very nice young instructress. I don't think Mr. Lloyd George would have at all approved. The School buildings unfortunately are not at all adequate, and have been condemned, and they are going to build some more. The room was divided into classes only by curtains, so there was a fearful babel. In the afternoon we went to see the Infants. Solemn little boys and girls

## Early Days of Community Life

knitting and sewing; and then having the most delightful games, and dancing. They had Sir Roger de Coverley—it was delicious to watch them. When it was time to go home they all looked so sad, poor little dears. One thing they did was to have a kind of dramatisation of fables—very short dialogues with action and a pronounced moral. And some of them recited “Three Little Kittens.”

Now I am in the throes of misery—to-morrow I am to give a criticism lesson which is very dreadful. And I believe there will be a lot of people at it. It is to be at 3.15—on Micah. Last term hardly anybody could come to it, so it was not so bad as I had expected, but I expect Sister — will be at this one.

January 31, 1909.

I really think the criticism lesson was very successful. The people I dreaded most and whose criticism I cared about all seemed quite pleased. Miss — was very pleased, and summed up most complimentarily. One child shot a question at me regarding verbal inspiration which was rather disconcerting—however we got out of the difficulty in the end. It was about “And thou, Bethlehem,” and I had been asking if there was any reason why Micah should have fixed on Bethlehem as a suitable birthplace; and the child said, “Why do you say that if he was a prophet?” However, I had got something prepared on that subject, only I was coming on to it later. It is very nice indeed to have it over.

I went down last evening to see *A Sheep in Wolf's Clothing*, acted by the St. X.'s Girls. It was so nice; it felt quite dissipated going out to the play!

# The Story of an English Sister

February 8, 1909.

Your letter was very nice and bucked me very much—four nice things—enquiries from two nice people, a cheque<sup>1</sup> and news of your coming! that is very jolly. Sister X. asked me if I wanted to give the money to anything, as I had earned it before coming here; but I didn't want to. I wish now I had done the other articles Dr. Murray asked me to! I have sent Gerry's letter on to Ernest. He doesn't mention whether he has been seasick! Will he see anything of Messina,<sup>2</sup> I wonder. Our Sisters did—they said it was too awful for anything even in the distance.

February 7, 1909.

How very exciting this is about Jack—I long to see the *Tuesday Review*,<sup>3</sup> and have asked Jack to send me a copy, worldly though it be. He certainly has cheek! Where does the money come from? From Giles's letter I infer that *he* has taken to glasses! How very sad—is it permanent? *What* a nice dinner party.

We went to a most charming lecture at the school on Thursday evening. It was by Mr. Cecil Sharp, on English Folk Songs. He has during the last six years been all over the place in England collecting them—songs, words and music—from the cottages. He makes friends with the people first, and then gets them to sing them. All the people are well over 70 that he gets them from, as people who have learnt to read and write forget them and they are dying out. He has literally rescued some from the brink of the

<sup>1</sup> For articles in Hastings's *Dictionary of the Bible*.

<sup>2</sup> On his way to India. A propos of the awful earthquake of 1909.

<sup>3</sup> A weekly paper started by Jack.

## Early Days of Community Life

grave; he had one sung to him by an old thing on a Tuesday and she died on the Saturday. He described some of his visits very charmingly. Then the lecture was illustrated by some *quite beautiful* songs. There was one wild eerie ballad with a beautiful tune. And he gave a most charming description of how he got out of some villagers, through the children, a version of "Matthew, Mark, Luke and John"—quite a long thing it is, with a different verse for each day of the week, and such a lovely tune to it. How I wish I could remember it. He was staying at the Parsonage at the time, with a great friend of his, and after he had got all his information he asked this friend what prayers the people said; and the friend said he had no means of knowing but that he did his best for them by providing prayers from the S.P.C.K. Then Mr. Sharp told him that all his people every night say this prayer—the version of Matthew, etc., much to the parson's astonishment; and they both agreed it was as beautiful a prayer as they could pray. I could not catch all the words, but there was something about the Holy Eucharist in the Thursday verse. I am sure it would be worth while to get what songs he has published (he has actually discovered more than 2000 !). I don't know whether the Matthew, Mark one is published. Make Phyllis sing them. There were some lovely love-songs; and splendid spirited sea-songs. After the singing, there were some excellent lantern slides—photographs of the old things who sang to him—such beautiful faces some of them had. He said that all the people who lived in the villages of the parson or squire, or even the shop-keeper type, all swore there was no singing in the village and never had been! He got 200 songs from one woman. If you ever get



## The Story of an English Sister

a chance of hearing him lecture do take it. He has set the songs himself and accompanies beautifully; the woman who sings them does so in such a way that you forget her in the songs, which is what is wanted I suppose.

*March 7, 1909.*

Are you really going to have the Abbot of Caldey to lunch? I didn't know you knew him. The worst has befallen and I am cantrix this week! I got an awful shock when I saw it up on the work book yesterday evening. It began at Compline last night, which is a much more complicated one in Lent—a long Responsary extra. However, I had been hearing it sung all the week before. So far I have had Compline, Lauds, Prime, Terce and None, and nothing very awful has happened yet beyond a certain hoarseness. In Lauds I couldn't start the antiphon to the Benedictus. I could think of no suitable tune, and there was a pause. However if you do pause some more experienced person always takes you up and helps you out, and it is better to pause than to make a horrid hash. Sunday is comparatively nice, but the week-day Offices really are rather complicated—extra penitential psalms, special memorials, etc.—such a lot of traps for a poor new cantrix. I find it very hard to know what note to pitch on. At Compline for the hymn I made them all sing in their boots; so to mend matters the next thing was sung very, very high! I expect it is practice. You are cantrix for a whole week at a time. Your voice all alone in that big Chapel sounds so funny and unlike your own!

*March 28, 1909.*

I have come to the conclusion that people who do not understand the principles of this Life have not

## Early Days of Community Life

quite got to the bottom of what Christianity itself means. Of course one could only expect Mr. X. to vituperate; but I am thinking more of people like Miss —, who are quite High Church!! There is a certain mystical element which they haven't quite grasped.

June 27, 1909.

All through this year we have been going to some perfectly charming lectures on the history of education by the history mistress at the school. They have been quite delightful—so vivid and *literary*; and I have been thinking more and more as time went on that she ought to publish them—they would make a dear little book. She began, as far as I remember, with Greek and Roman education; and this term is finishing with lectures on such subjects as Miss Edgeworth (that was a specially delightful one), Dr. Arnold, Thring, modern girls' schools—this was practically a sketch of Miss Beale. So the other day I approached her on the subject; and she, being a very modest creature, was quite taken aback. However I said I should write to you and ask you what would be the best publisher for a book of this kind. It is really a little book of vivid sketches, in many cases biographical, but some of them are accounts of schools—such as those of the Jesuits, Port Royal, Grammar Schools in the XVI Century, etc. She is evidently very well-read, very cultured, with a most charming *style*, and a distinct sense of the humorous. I am glad to say she is coming into our Noviciate in September—she is a real acquisition. What do you think she had better do about getting her book out? It is very clearly written in large notebooks. Such a good lecture on Herbert Spencer last time.

## The Story of an English Sister

Yes, I did like N.'s poem, but not as much as some of his others. There is one mixed metaphor—something about seeing a touch. Sonnet form is so difficult to be successful in (though his Sonnet *Homer* was really promising) and to keep up through six sonnets is really a task. Did he choose the form or the subject, or both? <sup>1</sup>

It is rather delightful not to have an examination in view, even though the results of one still are unknown. I am reading Bryce's *Holy Roman Empire* as you advised, and Oman's *Dark Ages*. I am to teach quite a lot of history next year. The prospect is not very pleasant!

October 3, 1909.

I have just been writing to Mr. Russell <sup>2</sup> to ask him to come to our prize-giving. I feel quite sure he won't! I've written a very nice letter to him—it ought to melt his heart, but I am not a “jewel.” <sup>3</sup>

October 10, 1909.

My children expect a good deal from their Sister—more than I expected they would. I had settled beforehand that I would not be the kind of person who is always slobbering and digging into their little souls; and that I would *not* go upstairs and say good-night to them in bed; but be more like the Wycombe house-mistresses. But it's no use—the relations are different to start with. The girls here depend on the Sisters and want them to talk to them. Perhaps it is because they are Sisters. “Oh, Sister, you might

<sup>1</sup> She is speaking of a prize poem.

<sup>2</sup> The Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell.

<sup>3</sup> Mr. Russell always spoke of my boys as my jewels, but I am sure he included Ethel.

## Early Days of Community Life

come up and say good-night to me in bed," they say in little wistful voices. They are dears.

I told you we were going to do *The Tinder Box*, I think. Mr. Russell wrote me a very nice letter back—which pleased the authorities here—saying he entirely disapproved of education for girls, as it enabled them to get better classes than their brothers, and know about people's sons and daughters in the Acts better than their elders.<sup>1</sup> I knew, of course, he wouldn't come—he wasn't my suggestion. Now I have written to Miss —.

November 14, 1909.

DEAREST NORMAN AND GILES,

I must write a little line to thank you for sending on Jack's diary so regularly—what fun it is, isn't it! Mrs. C——<sup>2</sup> wrote to me the other day and said, "I can just see your brother strolling about America!"—which exactly expresses it. Have you read *The Jungle*? I thought of it directly I saw the p.c.s. I should love to hear again from one of you—Norman this time, perhaps—of how you like the new house and Mr. Lubbock. I am living down at one of our schools now and am a full-fledged teacher. Does Norman remember talking to Sister —, who came to the Flat once? She was a great friend of mine, and we are all very sad now because she died last Tuesday of consumption. You might pray for her repose. She was a splendid Sister—the one who looked after our girls, you know, and she was so kind to me when I first came; I was her secretary. Only time for this

<sup>1</sup> He had one day alluded inadvertently to the *seven* daughters of Philip, and Fritz had replied that they were only four in number, but Sceva had seven sons, exorcists. This became a standing joke.

<sup>2</sup> A *protégée* of Ethel.

## The Story of an English Sister

little scrap—much love, dear boys. I do hope we shall meet in the holidays.

Your very loving  
FRITZ.

[To me : Ernest had had a bad relapse.]

November 21, 1909.

This is very upsetting news about our dear Laird, and I am afraid all the more so for you, because things always are horrid if one is out of reach of the people concerned. But they are both such splendidly plucky cheerful people that all we can do is to be cheerful and plucky too. Ernest made such good progress at the Sanatorium—he is sure to do well if he takes even stronger measures.

I so enjoyed your last letter all about the school.<sup>1</sup> I had their prospectus and am going to ask if we may send a magazine of ours. I think you ought to take in our *School Magazine* considering your daughter is editor of it. It costs 1/8 a year.

*The Tinder Box* was performed yesterday afternoon before 50 workmen, who are being employed in building additions on to the school and whom Sister —, who is nothing if not hospitable, was anxious to entertain. She asked me early in the week if we could get *The Tinder Box* (due for next Thursday) ready by the Saturday before; so we had a regular go at it and it really came off most successfully. Only my own Recreation people were acting in it and we all enjoyed ourselves hugely. When the Princess says "Tell me, dear Valaroso, do Princesses ever marry soldiers?" soft music begins, the music of a gavotte, and when she says, "Then why shouldn't I marry

<sup>1</sup> At Davenport, U.S.A.

## Early Days of Community Life

*you ?* ” and he says “ My angel, will you be my wife ? ” the music gets a little louder and then they dance the gavotte, which is so pretty ; the landlord doesn’t come in to say “ The King and Queen are coming upstairs,” till they have finished. It is so nice to think we have the real performance still to come, and also *The Critic* about which I am feeling a little anxious. We shall have the next three afternoons quite free for rehearsing. Besides rehearsals this week I have to help three children with their examination before Confirmation.

I came across our name in Sir James Paget’s *Life* the other day—I didn’t know it was there before—in rather an amusing connexion. How charmingly Stephen writes.

How many Bishops do you know now, counting English and Scotch ones ?

December 5, 1909.

I’ve had such a nice letter from Winnie Knox, offering her *St. Louis*<sup>1</sup> to us. Betty Forbes sent me *The Times* review of this—it begins “ This is a brilliant book.” Won’t you get some one to give it to you for Xmas ?

December 12, 1909.

I haven’t had any news of you since last Sunday and no letter to-day : perhaps it will come to-morrow. The last thing I heard was of your travels in the Rockies. Jack’s description of the Rockies is magnificent. No one who can write as he does can be called uneducated.<sup>2</sup> Query : Are Latin and Greek really so necessary for the education of a gentleman ?

<sup>1</sup> Miss Knox’s brilliant *Court of a Saint*.

<sup>2</sup> Jack has made up for any deficiencies in classical lore since his years at Eton and Oxford.

## The Story of an English Sister

But I am afraid he will never spell "colour" with a "u" any more. Your and his Americanisms are killingly funny and will be the subject of many jibes when we meet. How I wish he were coming back with you! The end of the term is very near at hand—and by the time you get this I shall be basking at home<sup>1</sup>—as it has been settled I am to go home for Xmas, which is glorious. We are all beginning to feel a little end-of-termly. School Sisters certainly score in the matter of holidays—penitents cannot be got rid of three times a year. I wonder when you will get this—I must write a little Xmas note in a few days—but only a little note I am afraid; this must be the real Xmas letter.

*The Epiphany, 1910.*

DEAREST GRANNY,

What does it feel like to be Granny twice over or doubly? Now you can talk about your grandchildren—it sounds very venerable! Isn't it lovely? Only I wish it was a niece. I am afraid he<sup>2</sup> is going to be named Ian, but I am not going to interpose this time—beyond suggesting that Epiphanius Balthasar Romanes would sound so well.

Your loving—

FRITZ.

*January 26, 1910.*

I suppose this will catch you at Plymouth, and that you are travelling there at this present moment, if you haven't arrived.

I do hope after this you will rest—I believe you are much more tired than you know, after America. I

<sup>1</sup> The Mother House.

<sup>2</sup> Walter John Romanes was born on January 5, 1910.

## Early Days of Community Life

don't approve of your going out to early Mass, especially as there are so many 10 o'clocks. Dyce will want you to go to Monday 10 o'clocks in Lent—did she tell you?—to help make a congregation.<sup>1</sup>

February 27, 1910.

Sister — seems most grateful for the books and to have revelled in *Abbé Morel*. Do you think of your charity you could lend me some more books to lend her? I will keep an eye upon them all and bring them back at Easter. She would like best light and interesting literature, but not novels. It is rather dull for her, poor dear; it would be a real charity. I know the sort of books she would like. She would love *Father and Son*—all religious do! also books like Mr. Russell's *Recollections*; and biography, our *Life*, e.g., would edify, I think. Your *Port Royal* and *Pages from a Private Diary*—and essays of a light description. She is a very good French scholar and would enjoy *Coppée*, I should think.

Miss Pearson sent me a hastily got up petition to sign, for Mrs. Toynbee to present at the next Council meeting at L.M.H.—asking the Council to proceed with a new Chapel before they do anything else. They want to go on and finish the new wing; but the present Chapel won't hold the students, and is in all respects most unworthy of Lady Margaret Hall. Shall you be at the Council Meeting to support this?

How interesting about Dr. Figgis. Thank you so much for Bradley—how fascinating he is.<sup>2</sup> My proofs have come and I snatch odd moments at them.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This was specially arranged for women, and an address was given.

<sup>2</sup> *Ten Plays of Shakespeare*, by Professor Bradley.

<sup>3</sup> The proofs of her little book, *What a Christian must Believe*.



## The Story of an English Sister

[The following letter refers to the detention of Ernest and Alex at Ellis Island. The officials were of German extraction and behaved exactly like Prussian officials of the peculiarly brutal type. Thanks to Jack's energy and to our Ambassador, Lord Bryce, and friends in New York, Ernest and Alex, the children and maids were soon released.]

*April 14, 1910.*

Poor old Ernest and Alex—how absolutely horrible for them! As you say it is just like him to have got himself into the mess. Novice — says Ellis Island is the place where all the paupers are landed like sheep and examined. I do hope Jack did meet them at New York and comfort them a bit. When will their letters arrive, I wonder. I do feel so sorry for the dears. *What* a dinner you must have had! <sup>1</sup> I am glad they were such nice people with you. Novice — now tells me that she had a friend once who had a little girl who developed chicken-pox, and they were detained on this very island for three weeks and it was too horrible—people all herded together in little wooden shanties.

It's all over now, though, and they are *not* on their way home again—so let us cheer up. How very interesting their letters will be. I shall be thankful when they get safe to Colorado Springs.

*April 17, 1910.*

Many thanks for budget. Do send me all the press cuttings. I enjoy them hugely. Now that it is all over I don't feel at all distressed, I am afraid. It is

<sup>1</sup> I was rung up at dinner by a newspaper reporter, who wished to know my views on the Ellis Island incident.

## Early Days of Community Life

my hard heart. I think it is evident from *The Daily Mail* cutting that it is thanks entirely to "Frank"<sup>1</sup> that Ernest and Alex are not at the present moment on their way home. I hope E. will hold him in higher estimation for the future. I am sure E. himself would never have thought of appealing to any one, but would have turned meekly home again. Poor dear things, what a horrible time of suspense they must have had. I agree that it was an "outrage," don't you? I hope you have quite got over it now; the Follies I am afraid would hardly help you to do so! However you have got the Rivals to-morrow night with dear R. E. G. and the boys. I shall be with you in the spirit! Can't you see "Frank" haranguing the officials and saying he was astonished, etc.! All are most sympathetic here. I have just sent in the cutting from the Manchester paper to the Mother. The headlines are almost as good as those in your selection of cuttings!

I am not Head Novice until this evening at 6.30, when all the others go into Retreat. I will tell you what it is like on Wednesday! I feel rather nervous at present.

What a charming letter from Mr. Leckie<sup>2</sup>—he must be a perfect dear. Is there perhaps something in what he says at the end? I wish we could find something which would show that they have had Order all the time.

Mind you send all the American letters when they come—Jack's will be especially amusing, as no incident loses in the telling when he is the narrator!

<sup>1</sup> Jack's first name is Francis, and in the American Press he was usually called Mr. Frank.

<sup>2</sup> The author of a book on Authority which I had reviewed. He is a minister of the Free Church of Scotland.

# The Story of an English Sister

April 27, 1910.

I have read Jack's diary with *great* interest—well, they *were* brutes. It is almost incredible. I wonder whether, if they had held out at first, it would have been possible to refuse to go to Ellis Island at all? When once they were there I can quite imagine it would be difficult to get out, and the officials would not be used to seeing people like them and would not know how to behave. I suppose you haven't heard from Alex or E. yet? Also I suppose there will be another bit of diary coming—as this does not finish the incident. I have sent it in to our Mother now, who asked to have it when it came.

Make Norman write and tell me his operative impressions. I was just about his age when Wagner burst upon me.

[On the death of Edward VII.]

May 8, 1910.

Isn't it too terrible to be believed? One can't take it in at all. I must say I felt very anxious on Friday morning when I saw *The Daily Graphic* up at the school—there was something ominous in the wording of the bulletin. Then in the afternoon there was already a rumour about in the town that the King was dead—and later on about seven the news at the Post Office was very serious. Still, as you say, it was an awful shock. I should like to be in London at a time like this. Oddly enough I never have been—except at the Jubilees. When I say “a time like this,” I mean a time of great national joy or sorrow. It must be a wonderful thing to see. I could not help thinking that Americans must miss a great deal. I

## Early Days of Community Life

am sure they can't feel as we do about this when their Presidents die. Isn't it curious about that rhyme—do you know it?—

“When Good Friday is in our Lady's lap  
To England will fall a great mishap”—

*i. e.* when the Annunciation and Good Friday concur.

I was so glad to get your letter on Friday. Won't we have a lovely August. A Somerset novice says the Mendips are enchanting; and that she is sure she could get us the address of good lodgings. She recommends Axbridge as a good centre; it has a good church and it is not far from Wells and Glastonbury: she says the scenery is exquisite—hills and heather and views of the Bristol Channel. I have just had such a dear letter from Winnie—she is in France just now—it is so nice to think of her abroad. She is writing more history.

*Ascension Day, 1910.*

The next Profession here is to be on the Feast of the Transfiguration. Will you care to attend it?

What do you say to Yorkshire moors and abbeys? If you like them, couldn't Will<sup>1</sup> ask Mr. Gray<sup>2</sup> to recommend rooms in some farm near Helmsley, and make that a centre; and perhaps we should have one of Mr. Gray's nice Churches near by—rather a good thing directly after Profession! Yorkshire is so nice for expeditions, isn't it? you get such glorious teas for one thing. Do you specially want the sea? But you could have that and Yorkshire moors. Won't

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. Ingham.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Charles Gray, who was so long Vicar of Helmsley, and who made the lovely little village a centre of Catholic life.

## The Story of an English Sister

it be a lovely happy rest? You needn't wait till Sunday to write me a line!

Poor *dear E.*'s. It was characteristic of E., as you say—so guileless and truthful!

May 26, 1910.

I am told that Fowey is not nearly so attractive as North Cornwall, though very nice; and that the inland scenery is not much to boast of. I still feel rather drawn by the description of the Mendips—on that side they are warm and the Novice says the scenery is exquisite—it's near Cheddar and its cave. Fowey is very full of visitors too.

I am so much enjoying *Professor Hall*,<sup>1</sup> which I have now rescued. I should think he must be a very useful sort of person. For spiritual reading I am going right through Monsignor Gay—do you know him? If not do get him. He is quite beautiful and such exquisite French. I am sure I am right in saying French is a vehicle for prose rather than for poetry<sup>2</sup>; and German vice versa.

The sun is simply glorious here and the garden is looking so pretty. Do send me the boys' account of the funeral. I hope they have written a good one. Have you had that special *Times*—the reproduction of bits of *The Times* during those two weeks? I should think our American people<sup>3</sup> would be thankful for it. I had a nice letter from Alex—poor dears, they have not got over the physical effects yet.

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Francis Hall. I do not know to which of his books she refers.

<sup>2</sup> A standing argument with us. I still think the French language is a vehicle for poetry.

<sup>3</sup> Ernest and Alex.

## Early Days of Community Life

June 9, 1910.

What a delightful time you have been having at Oxford. Yes, you do tell things beautifully—only, as I say, in an allusive way! I knew it was the Romanes Lecture on Tuesday, for certain, by the account of it in *The Daily Graphic* on Wednesday, only of course the boys' allusion had prepared me for the possibility. I also read there of your dinner party at the Vice Chancellor's and of the other guests.

What has Dr. Sanday done—"a new kind of Bran,"<sup>1</sup> it looks like!

June 12, 1910.

Thank you so much for *The Romanes Lecture*—it looks entertaining. I should think Jack would like it, wouldn't he? What a darling Jack is. I like him more and more. What a rushful week you seem to have had. Don't break down before August.

I gather Mr. Ford is to be head of Harrow. How very nice that is. How difficult for Mrs. Talbot to know which side to be on in the Eton and Harrow! May is a darling.

An old Sister came here the other day, who asked to see me and then fell on my neck and said I was to be sure to tell you how much she loved your Miss Yonge, as it made her feel as if she were seeing all her old friends again. She evidently had been in that set. She was brimming with enthusiasm. The Mistress took it with her to Bournemouth too. When do you go north? I expect I shall get a letter from you suddenly from Dunskaith one of these days.

<sup>1</sup> Probably I was referring to a new book of Dr. Sanday's, and to his theory about the Subliminal.

# The Story of an English Sister

*June 19, 1910.*

So many thanks for the account of all your adventures—it must be a very thrilling experience.<sup>1</sup> It is certainly a wonderful thing that all are able to say the Apostles' Creed. Do you go on to Dunskaith afterwards? I never know where you are going or what you are going to do next! It is only after the things have happened.

The Retreat is over and many of the Sisters are gone, though a good many stay for this week-end. The Retreat seems to have been a most beautiful one from all accounts; and the weather was lovely, and all seem to have been satisfied with the way *we* ran the House! We all feel much elated by this!

How lovely to see you next month. I do hope it will be glorious and hot as it is now—it is a simply perfect day.

*June 23, 1910.*

I wonder where you are now! I have not the remotest notion. I wonder if you have been having the gorgeous hot weather we have been having—such a delightful sensation and so rare to be really hot.

We have been having our hearts in our mouths at school, because a lady inspector has been inspecting us and popping in and out of our classes for two whole days. It is over now, we are all thankful to think. She was quite nice, but it just shows what good inspection is that when I played up on some of the

<sup>1</sup> I was at the Edinburgh Conference on Missions. A good many Catholics disapproved of the Conference, and, alas! the war has sadly disappointed our hopes. Nor do I think we can ever hope for much from Protestantism of the Teutonic type.

## Early Days of Community Life

theories the great Miss — had told me she took the opposite view. One can't please everybody.

July 3, 1910.

I thought of you on Friday evening, and hoped you were in the little cabin.<sup>1</sup> I am so glad the week in the far north was so satisfactory. It is so funny to think of all those far-away people all going on just the same.

Have you a new *Ancient and Modern*—I mean the edition we use here. If so, look out No. 364. We had it the evening after the election, just after I wrote to you. Well, before that we had all been wishing we could think of six somethings. In the last Profession when there were seven, they had each chosen one of the Seven Champions of Christendom; in the one before when there were eight, each had a Beatitude, etc. But there is not anything with six—when lo and behold came this hymn! It came at the end of a beautiful Evensong in which everything fitted in specially for us. 27th Evening Psalms; Queen Esther being accepted; St. John's Epistle; Magnificat, Nunc Dimittis; General Thanksgiving. So we are all going to have this hymn written at the beginning of our office books. We jumbled all the verses up on six pieces of paper and each drew one; and the verse which is our own special one is to be written in red. Mine was the fourth verse. They seem to have fallen as though they were meant for us.

[I add the hymn. Etheldred was quite surprised to find I already knew and loved it. We had often sung it in Retreat to a lovely tune out of *Songs of*

<sup>1</sup> A dear little room at Dunskaith, my sister-in-law's house.



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*Syon.* Her special verse suited her exactly. She indeed experienced that "perfect freedom" which comes from whole-hearted service.]

864, *New Edition of H. A. & M.*

- 1 Holy Spirit, Truth Divine,  
Dawn upon this soul of mine.  
Voice of God and inward light,  
Wake my spirit, clear my sight.
- 2 Holy Spirit, Love Divine,  
Glow within this heart of mine.  
Kindle every high desire,  
Perish self in Thy pure fire.
- 3 Holy Spirit, Power Divine,  
Fill and nerve this will of mine.  
By Thee may I strongly live,  
Bravely bear and nobly strive.
- 4 Holy Spirit, Law Divine,  
Reign within this soul of mine.  
Be my law and I shall be  
Firmly bound, forever free.
- 5 Holy Spirit, Peace Divine,  
Still this restless heart of mine.  
Speak to calm this tossing sea,  
Stayed in Thy tranquillity.
- 6 Holy Spirit, Joy Divine,  
Gladden Thou this heart of mine.  
In the desert ways I sing,  
Spring, O Well, forever spring.

July 7, 1910.

At the present moment I am sitting with two of the six Novices; one is in charge of the North Wing where you slept last year, and the other in charge of the East Wing where you have also been—the time you were ill. They are engaged in a quarrel as to which of them is to have you to look after in the

## Early Days of Community Life

Retreat. They are both such dears. I made Novice — most wroth by saying to Novice — “ Oh, yes, I hope Mother will be in the East Wing—you will look after her so well ”: “ As if *I* should not look after her if she was on the North Wing—it isn’t the first time I have had her ! ”

Norman at our request sent me Mr. Macnaghton’s poem in the *Eton Chronicle*, because we heard it was so wonderful. He sent it with comments. So I have sent it comments and all to Mother at Recreation !

July 10, 1910.

Novice — is just telling me how Sister — has been rushing wildly about asking people “ Have you seen *Romanes on the Collects* ? I have lost her out of my room and I want her badly.” It transpired that Novice — had got her and had had her in her cupboard for a week.<sup>1</sup>

I quite thought something awful had happened last week—that you had been borne off to a Nursing Home, and that Elizabeth was waiting till the operation was over before telling me.

What an interesting time you have been having. It is exactly four years ago to-day since I lunched with the Archbishop (of Canterbury).

[This was written a week before her Profession.]

July 31, 1910.

This is my last letter. We go into retreat this evening after Evensong. You need not fear. It is all too entirely blissful to describe. I wish I could

<sup>1</sup> My books on the Collects, in two volumes.

## The Story of an English Sister

say a little what it is like—but it is like the beginning of Heaven.

I had a most beautiful letter from Ernest to-day. I will show it to you when you come. Also one from Padre Longridge (C.R.). I wonder what time you will get here. I rather hope in time for 1st Vespers of the Transfiguration, which is all part of the day itself—and which will be sung.

We are having our hymn (364) one day this week; isn't it sweet of them to have it for us? If only this weather will hold out till Saturday how perfect it will all be.

Dear John <sup>1</sup>—I think he had a very loving heart—how he did love Gerry.

<sup>1</sup> Our butler, who had been with us all my married life up to the time of Ernest's marriage. He left us then and died 1910.

## CHAPTER VII

### AFTER HER PROFESSION (1910-1918)

THE Profession was most beautiful. The Eton boys were there and various friends. I insert here a few of the letters she received on the day and one from Dr. Sanday which gave her great pleasure.

I went back to Oxford for a few days, and then she and I and the Eton boys went to the Mendips for a fortnight. We then had a few days in Cornwall before she returned to her work.

#### *Letters to Etheldred on her Profession*

[From the Bishop of London.]

*Fulham,  
August 4, 1910.*

God bless you, dear, for Saturday, how differently God guides us. I am marrying Phillis Hoskyns here to-day, and you are to be "married" in a different way on Saturday.

May you have, dearest Fritz, "the joy that no man taketh from you."

Yours most affectionately,

A. F. LONDON.

# The Story of an English Sister

[From the Archbishop of York.]

*Bishopthorpe, York,  
August 2, 1910.*

MY DEAR FRITZ,

I must call you by the old name, and I am glad you signed your letter to me with it. But I don't know what to call you on the envelope. So if it seems grossly wrong, forgive and don't be shocked, and don't tell any one that it is the woeful ignorance of an Archbishop!

I am very glad you told me that Saturday is to be the great day. You may be sure that I shall think of you often in my prayers during this week and then. I used often to profess Sisters in my London days, so I can enter fully into all the spirit of the Service, and of its beautiful symbolism.

It will be indeed your Coronation Day. You will be crowned with the crown of love and service and sacrifice. It does me good and both rebukes and lifts me to think of all the thoughts, desires, and prayers now being offered to our Blessed Lord by one whom I know so well. Merely to stand far off in sympathy at such a time brings me into the nearer Sanctuary of our faith—the full and joyful merging of human life in the Perfect Life, human and divine, of Christ. The very thought of your preparation this week and of your joyful surrender on Saturday brings to me a sense of peace, of assurance of divine realities, which is a good beginning for my holiday. You will know that the spirit of your old friend—this poor unworthy Archbishop—will be in the rich and bountiful benedictions which will be breathed over you on Saturday, and sometimes, afterwards, you in your quiet times of Prayer and Communion,

## After Her Profession

will remember him. He needs the prayers of such as you in his ceaseless burden of public work and responsibility. Ask that he may not lose the old deep realities of love of the Christ and union with Him. Ask that the patient loving Spirit of God may bear with him, and guide him and keep him from falling.

And so, dear Fritz, with all my heart I give you my Blessing.

May God the Father bless you and keep you : may God the Son give you more and more the joy of His Love, and of His Presence in your soul : may God the Holy Ghost teach and guide and uplift you always.

Your affectionate friend,

COSMO EBOR :

Tell your mother that I shall think of her as well as of you on Saturday ; it will be a joint oblation.

[From the Right Hon. G. W. E. Russell.]

18 Wilton Street, S.W.

August 2, 1910.

DEAR SISTER ETHELDRED,

I am sending for your acceptance an Ikon, which I hope you will like, as it is both learned and devotional !

Please translate the inscriptions for my benefit. Mrs. Romanes will kindly convey it.

And now I must say a more serious word, in view of what is to happen on the Feast of the Transfiguration.

I pray that God may grant you many happy years in His Service on Earth, and hereafter " make you a

## The Story of an English Sister

partaker of His Vision and His Sabbath." With all  
kind thoughts and wishes,

I am your sincere friend,

G. W. E. RUSSELL.

18 Wilton Street, S.W.

August 10, 1910.

DEAR SISTER ETHELDRED,

I am glad you had a happy day on Saturday.  
May it be to you the beginning of days, the first day  
of an Everlasting Year.

I want to know the inscriptions on the Ikon. I  
seemed to see some Greek characters; but are there  
also some Russian? Of course you know all these  
things at St. —!

Pray get your pupils quite clear about Sceva and  
Philip and their respective families.

Your mother has kindly sent your little book, which  
I think excellent.

Your letter refers mysteriously to "Philip"—the  
Deacon? or Waggett? or who?

Yours sincerely,

GEORGE RUSSELL.

[From Professor Sanday.]

Christ Church, Oxford,

August 14, 1910.

DEAR SISTER ETHELDRED,

Your good mother took advantage of my  
asking about your little book to give me a copy, and  
she gave me leave to write and thank you for it. I  
do so very sincerely, because I have a great desire  
to be able to write directly and simply about things,  
and the example helps of those who can do so. I

## After Her Profession

feel sure it must have been a great pleasure and real advantage to you to write it, if only for the sake of going systematically over the whole ground and bringing one part of the faith into relation to another. It seems to me, if I may say so, that there is always point in what you say, and that you have kept proportion happily. I can believe that you have great opportunities in the quietness and peace of your new vocation, and I trust you may be enabled to make the fullest use of them.

Believe me,

Yours sincerely,

W. SANDAY.

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September 18, 1910.

How nice it sounds—I should think the boys must have loved it.<sup>1</sup> I wonder what you are doing to-day. We are having a very quiet and peaceful Sunday before the children tumble in upon us, having finished all our preparations for receiving them (which are really very laborious though entertaining). I am to have the Literature as was arranged. I am glad to find that Mark Pattison shares my view of *Samson*—according to him Milton wrote it when his powers were declining, and on the whole he thinks it flat, and altogether very inferior to *Paradise Lost*. What I have got to take with the Class is the *Hadow Book*, Vol. III, which treats of so many people and covers so wide a field that it is consoling impossible in the time to give lessons on all of it. It is 17th, 18th, and 19th century literature, beginning with Donne,

<sup>1</sup> A visit to Mr. and Mrs. Brocklebank at their delightful home, Wateringbury Place, Kent.



## The Story of an English Sister

Herbert, Herrick, Lovelace, etc.—going on to Milton; Dryden, prose writers like Bunyan, Defoe, etc. Then Pope, then a chapter on a contrast of styles, Addison, Steele, Gibbon, Macaulay; Wordsworth and Coleridge; Keats, Byron, Shelley; the Novelists, Scott, Dickens, Thackeray, Miss Austen; Browning and Tennyson; and I have forgotten a chapter on Blake and Burns; and another on the earliest Nature poets, Thomson, etc. I will write a complete list of the people the book deals with—this is by no means complete. In each case a quotation is given—it makes a very scrappy tantalising sort of book in a way. I find Courthope<sup>1</sup> most useful, and shall find all the books on Milton equally so.

September 25, 1910.

Such a lot of very nice things have come—so many, many thanks for them. Gay<sup>2</sup> has arrived and looks quite beautiful: *Lyra Sacra*—I had quite forgotten what it was and how much I like it. Then several other things—the mythology book which I am most thankful for. Blackwall also has sent me *Modern Painters* and *Milton*. I really feel as if I might get through now—if only there was a little more time to read. I really think we do a surprising amount in the day—there isn't a minute left unused. There is barely time to prepare the lessons one is going to give the next day, and what I want is time to make indirect as well as immediate preparation. I have given two lessons—one an introduction to the study of Literature based entirely on Mr. Arnold's *Essay on the Study of Poetry* with a few remarks of Ruskin's

<sup>1</sup> *History of Poetry*, by the late William John Courthope, who was an old friend of ours.

<sup>2</sup> Monsignor Gay's book on *Christian Perfection*.

## After Her Profession

thrown in, the other on the poets of "wit." I filled up the time on both occasions, but felt it was rather gassy and windbaggy.

How nice for you to be going to that dear Archbishop (of York). Give him my very dearest love.

The new Mistress at school is quite a success so far, but is gooder and piouser than any Sister, and has very exalted notions of what Sisters are like—that they live on dry bread, etc. So the nurse has asked Sister — to tea, and has made a chocolate cake on purpose that she may enjoy the spectacle of a Sister taking pleasure in cake!

*Michaelmas Day, 1910.*

How very exciting about Gerry—I do hope it will come off. Anyhow we shall see him in 1911, which is very rapturous to think of.<sup>1</sup>

The following London Library books have arrived—

Courthope, *History of English Poetry*, Vols. I. and III.

Arnold, *Essays in Criticism*.

Bigg, *Origins of Christianity*.

Johnson, *Lives of the Poets*.

The girls are having a dance this evening to celebrate the Angels' Feast, and we shall have a picnic on Saturday.

Mr. Trevelyan came last week; he had a book which he had been asked to look at and pull to pieces, so he handed it on to me—extracts dealing with sorrow, illness, death, etc., intended for the sick. Also he talked about an idea he has that there ought to be a Liddon House for women. I told him this had

<sup>1</sup> Gerald was in India. He did come home, too late to see Ernest.

## The Story of an English Sister

been thought of before ! and as he was going to see Mr. Mackay I told him to apply to him.<sup>1</sup>

*October 2, 1910.*

We had a charming lunch picnic yesterday—to a little dell with a stream; the same place we went to last Whitsun Monday. The whole school went except some tinies, a few invalids and one unfortunate culprit. Sister — and I walked home a little earlier than the others and regaled each other with ghost stories, which we have each found the other likes as much as we ourselves (if you can understand that sentence !). She told me two exceedingly good ones. One of her grandmothers was exceedingly fond of a little granddaughter who was very ill indeed, in fact dying. The grandmother had gone abroad to the Riviera for her own health, and slept with a maid; one night she woke up suddenly and said, “Some one has just thrown a doll at my arm”; and the maid lit a light and there was nothing there, and the maid said, “Even if you did feel something, how could you have thought it was a doll in the dark ?” But she had so strong a conviction that she wrote down the experience with the date and hour. Afterwards she heard that at that very moment the mother of the little girl (in England) had brought her a new doll, and the little girl, who was very irritable because of her illness, had taken it and saying, “You know I hate dolls dressed in green,” had thrown it with a violence which surprised her mother (because she did not think her strong enough) to the end of the bed.

Her other grandmother was once awakened one

<sup>1</sup> It now exists. Mr. Mackay and I had talked it over before this time, but it only came into being after Ethel's death.

## After Her Profession

morning by a knock at the door of her room and the maid coming in as usual. She had a letter in her hand which was black-edged, and laying it on the bed she said, "I'm afraid there's bad news, ma'am." The grandmother put her hand out to take the letter, but there was no letter there and no maid : and looking at her watch she found it was only 5 o'clock; so she thought it must have been a very vivid dream. At 8 o'clock precisely the same thing happened, only this time it was real. The knock, the maid coming in with the letter and laying it down in precisely the same spot with the same words; and there was bad news.

I told the story of Mr. Graham's ghost and how we listened for it at Heidelberg. Do you happen to remember the date at which the man in armour lived? Sister — told the story to Sister — who is sceptical, because she says ghosts of middle ages times don't come ever (it's a rule!) because they have worn out long before now; but he was quite an early middle age person, wasn't he? Sister — goes in for being very sceptical about visions, etc.

I am reading *Comus* with my Higher Local pupil and enjoying it quite enormously.

October 8, 1910.

Give my dear love to the Inghams. I think I will send this there, as it will be nice for you to get a letter when you arrive. Tell Uncle Will that I am exactly the same and love him as much as or more than ever.

October 15, 1910.

I am trying to get up a Society composed of Sisters, Mistresses, and Girls, which will meet once a fortnight

## The Story of an English Sister

and every member must be prepared (at a fortnight's notice) to entertain the rest and edify also—*i. e.* what is done must be (1) good and (2) well done. Reading, reciting, lecturing, singing, acting and dancing are all allowed. I think it might be rather nice. It is not to be merely frivolous, as we have a good deal of frivolity in any case.

*Sunday.*—We had rather a nice lantern lecture last evening by a wonderful man who studies wild birds and photographs them. We had beautiful photographs which had been taken quite near; he stalks them in all kinds of ingenious ways. I could not help wondering whether this kind of catching of birds would not be just as much "sport" as the killing of them is—there is precisely the same method of hunting in both cases—only the final shot in this case is the shot of the camera. He had one wonderful picture of a bird just taking to flight, proving that the Japanese artists in their extraordinary pictures of birds flying (which don't look real) have all along been perfectly right.

November 13, 1910.

I have made out, I think, Prof. Cairns's<sup>1</sup> meaning. I should have thought that the adoration of our Blessed Lord's Presence in the Holy Eucharist is the answer to his question; though as a matter of fact the best Christians of the present time do look for the parousia—I believe Bishop Wilkinson daily expected it.

[My eldest son died in Colorado, November 13, 1910; he had gone there in pursuit of health.]

<sup>1</sup> My friend Professor Cairns of Aberdeen.

## After Her Profession

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

*November 14, 1910.*

MY DARLING,

I wonder if it is any good writing to you or whether you will cross this on your way home. Dear, dear Alex, what can one say? You will know how our hearts ache for you (and for ourselves). I don't think we believe it yet—it is harder to believe, perhaps, when it hasn't actually happened with us, but far away, and everything goes on as usual all round. We can only be thankful that you have Jack—he will take such care of you, Alex dear—he has always loved you so. I am just back from town. I rushed up again, of course, when the news came. We had Vespers of the Dead in the crypt at S.M.M. in front of the Blessed Sacrament. Dear R.E.G.<sup>1</sup> came to see us in the afternoon. Then we just sat and talked all the rest of the evening. Norman and Giles were up from Eton, and after they were gone to bed Mother and I just sat and talked of you and the dear, dear Laird. I keep thinking of that wonderful letter he wrote to me at the time of my Profession—did you see it? The Novice Mistress tells me now that when she read it she felt sure he would not get better because it was the letter of a man looking straight on into the unseen. This morning we had the Requiem in the Chapel. I am sure we were all thinking of the Itinerarium then, and of the wedding. Dyce was there of course, and all the maids, including old Nan; you will have heard how Philip Waggett came up in the middle of the night on purpose to be there. It was so beautiful, Alex dear—just what you would have liked. Then home to countless letters.

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Giraud.

## The Story of an English Sister

You will be glad some time to read them. One from Mr. Lawson saying that he will always remember Ernest once a week at Mass—until *he* dies.

Darling Alex, I never stop thinking of you for a minute—how we *long* to see you. Your poor pitiful *cheerful* letters are still coming in. How strange and wonderful it all is, and how even now one can see and feel God in it all—which makes it possible to say: Thy Will be done.

Your v. loving—  
FRITZ.

[To me : after the Requiem for Ernest.]

November 16, 1910.

You will have been getting shoals of letters to-day. I had a nice one from Fr. Longridge (C.R.) and Mr. Russell has sent his little prayer to me. I must say the prayer I like best is the one in *The Christian's Manual*. Do send in any news as soon as you get it. I can't get over the mercy it is that Jack is there.

The Prize-giving is to-morrow, and I am to go down to the station to meet Mr. X. and bring him up in a fly. Prize-givings are dull things. Ours is not combined with entertainment of any kind, only speeches.

Much love to you and Giles.<sup>1</sup> How like a dream it all is still. It's all happening away from home makes it harder to think of as true. I have to keep telling myself what had happened in order to convince myself. Do you find that?

<sup>1</sup> Giles had broken his collar-bone at Eton football, and was with me for three months after Ernest's death. After Etheldred passed away I had him again while he waited for his commission. Now he is, too, beyond the veil.

## After Her Profession

November 20, 1910.

I was half expecting to get the Colorado news of the 8th to-day. I suppose it will come soon. There isn't much to tell you about. I find it is good on the whole to have a very full time so that one really has not any spare minutes to sit down and think. But it takes it out of one rather, and on Friday morning I stayed in bed till 9.30! the first time I have had breakfast in bed since coming here. This was very resting. Mother wrote me a charming letter just after I wrote to you; and there have been other very nice ones: Lucy Palmer, Sister —, etc. How sweet of the Bishops—give them my love, especially London. I wonder on what account and how long the delay is. How one longs to hear and yet dreads the letters. It does not seem in the least true yet; that is partly, of course, because we were not there. In W. H. H. J.'s case it was only too real.

The Prize-giving went off very nicely. Mr. X. is a dear, very shy and hardly made any speech at all; but that was made up for by the Bishop and Mr. —, who chaffed each other about Eton and Winchester.

The *Church Quarterly* is a great boon and keeps one up to things. I have been greatly interested in the first two articles.

I am afraid I don't "say nice things" like Kenneth<sup>1</sup>—you see I know you know them better than I do.

November 28, 1910.

I am so sorry you are laid up and hope it will not be for long. I sent on Alex's letter at once. One

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. K. D. Mackenzie—but Ethel did say "nice things."



## The Story of an English Sister

wonders how people live through these things. Indeed, as you say, it is merciful that it ended so soon, if it had to be. It is lovely to think of dear patient E. unfettered any longer by his frail body. How one longs for Alex to come back. Did you have the Bishop, I wonder?<sup>1</sup> I do hope so. I still have to tell myself what has happened and still cannot take it in.

This has been quite an eventful term. At the end of it the Mistresses of the two schools are going to do *Eagerheart*. It will be a nice change for me to watch it from in front instead of from behind.

Don't be long in coming to see me. Remember Wednesday and Thursday are my best days. How nice about the *Church Quarterly*.<sup>2</sup>

[To Mrs. Ernest Romanes.]

*Advent Sunday, 1910.*

MY DARLING ALEX,

I am simply longing to put my arms round you—when are you coming, I wonder. Perhaps you will not get this (I hope not), but it is just to tell you how I keep thinking of you. You are hardly ever out of my thoughts, dear, dear, brave Alex.

Our Lord must be meaning to make a very big saint of you—He must love you very, very specially to be trusting you with this tremendous sorrow. Your letter hasn't reached me yet—I am dreading it and yet longing for it too. I suppose it will get here on Monday or Tuesday.

This is only a little scrap hardly worth sending,

<sup>1</sup> Of London, who came to see me, as he always does come to see his friends when they are sorrow-stricken.

<sup>2</sup> I think this refers to my reviewing occasionally for it.

## After Her Profession

but you will know how much love it brings. I haven't taken it in at all yet. One half keeps telling the other half what has happened, but it won't believe it. I think not being there and not seeing any of it happen makes it harder to realise.

Everything here goes on as usual, of course, and so one has to give one's mind to the things about one, and then *force* oneself to believe this other thing.

Good-night, dearest Alex—my love to Jack.

Your loving—

FRITZ.

*December 4, 1910.*

Very many thanks for this budget. What a beautiful letter from that Mr. Sturgis.<sup>1</sup> What a nice time we had, didn't we?

Sister X. said to me she had quite forgotten to mention Denny<sup>2</sup> to you—he is much on her conscience, because she thinks you will think she has forgotten him, but really she is browsing on him, she says, and she hopes you don't want him back just yet, but if you do she will send him at once.

*December 11, 1910.*

Poor Miss —, it sounds rather a presumptuous thing to say, but I think conversion is what she needs!<sup>3</sup>

How is little Giles? Give him my love. And has Norman written to tell you how he got on?<sup>4</sup> We

<sup>1</sup> A prominent American Churchman.

<sup>2</sup> *Jesus of the Gospels*.

<sup>3</sup> A lady of note who had expressed great disapproval of the Religious Life.

<sup>4</sup> At a matriculation examination, or Smalls—I forget which.

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are looking forward to the end of the term. At this stage one wonders whether it ever *will* end !

*December 18, 1910.*

The end of term is well in view—also Christmas and January 2nd ! We have had two performances of *Eagerheart*, and the second especially was really beautiful. The staging was so pretty and the dresses charming. We are told that the singing sounded beautiful too, so altogether everybody is very much pleased.

I think I shall ask you to let me have breakfast in bed one day when I come—that is a thing which at present seems to me to be the most desirable thing in the world !

Here I was interrupted (an experience not unknown in the Religious Life), and there has not been a single moment since to finish this. We had such a nice evening on Friday. One of the Clergy came in to have an informal talk with my elder girls about politics—he is a keen politician. He reminded me rather of Jack in a way—not a bit shy, flowed on, and really talked most interestingly. So good for the girls and for me ! We all sat round the fire and he discussed the housing of the poor, old age pensions, etc.

I was so surprised about Dr. Holland's return to Oxford.<sup>1</sup>

*January 26, 1911.*

Many thanks for the notebook. We are having a glorious concert this evening, the first of a series of three; the proceeds are to go towards paying off

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. Dr. Holland, who had become Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford.

## After Her Profession

the money for a Grand Bechstein piano in which we have invested. It is a piano recital this evening. We are certainly most fortunate in our piano-mistress who is giving it. She is a real artist. We are going to have part of the piano concerto of Schumann's; a Beethoven sonata; a Bach Fugue and Prelude; something quite delicious of Scarlatti's, and last, but not least, a Brahms's Rhapsody in E Flat—simply glorious; I have heard her practising it. The piano arrived yesterday and is much admired.

All your presents have been greatly appreciated. The girls love their little 6d. poetry books which have now arrived and are quite keen about learning poetry. I am reading a little story by Tolstoi—*Master and Man*—quite fascinating.

February 14, 1911.

MY DEAREST NORMAN,

Many happy returns of the day. I hope you will have a very happy birthday, full of poetry and other good things. I expect you were as surprised as the rest of us at the arrival of Jack, weren't you? I am hoping to see him here on the 23rd. Have you done anything interesting lately? I hear you were top for *Hamlet*—gratters—does that mean a prize? That *Hundred Best Poems* series you told me about has been the great possible success here. The two top forms use them, and every week we have three quarters of an hour devoted to repetition. Each girl can choose her own piece. They are quite keen about it. I should be hearing them now, only there has been a case of measles, so the whole school has been sent out to blow measles away. They have gone on a paper-chase, which must be a delicious thing to do. I have never done it, have you? Are there such

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things as paper-chases at boys' schools nowadays, or is it only in books like *Schoolboy Honour* that one reads of them?

Do you know Giles Fletcher's *Christ's Victory and Triumph*? It is quite marvellously beautiful. I wish I knew how to get hold of it. Novice — was the first to tell me of it. Gosse says he is at once gorgeous and yet simple, majestic and yet touching, which seems to me to be a true appreciation.

What a number of questions I have asked you. That means you will have to answer them, especially as my birthday comes so soon after yours that you cannot possibly forget it!

How is le Père Guillaume?<sup>1</sup> Please give him a warm message from his Godsister.

We are having the gloriousest concerts this term. Our new Head is very keen about music; so we have bought a very good Bechstein Grand; and the concerts are to pay for it. We had a most beautiful piano recital the other day; our piano-mistress is extraordinarily good. We had Beethoven, Bach, Schumann, Scarlatti; and to crown everything, a Brahms's Rhapsody which cut through you like a knife. "I could have torn out my hair in handfuls," one of her younger hearers remarked! (perhaps not quite felicitously, but the appreciation which lay behind the remark was apparent).

Much love, dear Norman, to you and Giles, from—

FRTZ.

[To me]

February 19, 1911.

Thank you so much for all these lovely presents. The knife is a beauty: S.M.C. says it is like me! I

<sup>1</sup> A pet name for one of Norman's friends, who had adopted me as an extra Godmother.

## After Her Profession

thought she meant because it was fat, but apparently she meant something more complimentary. Then the book is one we are all glad to have; and the chocolates (they were from you too, weren't they?) we have been enjoying at Recreation, when S.M.C. read out to us some of the *Arcady* book,<sup>1</sup> which she is immensely taken with.

February 28, 1911.

It has been delicious having Jack. What a dear he is, so full of energy and confidence. I feel inclined to enthuse as dear Auntie used to do! Jack also impresses me with his brain power—none the less so that it does not take the form of scholarship. He will tell you about our day—I hope it was not too dull for him. He doesn't look well; that was the only thing I was sorry about.

The — party came over yesterday and practised the quartets and trios they are doing on Saturday—so glorious; a Mendelssohn trio, a Bach concerto, some Coleridge Taylor waltzes—quartets—and Miss X. will do some solos. This will be the pathetic occasion of her last performance in public; but she takes her strad with her; the Noviciate at Stone is very musical at present, and they have music, isn't that nice? They brought with them that I might see it—*Gathered Leaves*—the book Miss Sichel did about Miss Coleridge, including much of her writing, and a quite delicious set of William Cory's coachings. I expect you know the book, but I had not seen it before. I like the story about Faber, who to his delight found his scholarly but pagan friend reading St. Luke. But all his friend said was, "Rum chap,

<sup>1</sup> *Studies in Arcady*, Gale.

## The Story of an English Sister

Luke, uses the Future Optative with &'' ! I must refrain from telling that story to the Fifth with whom I am reading St. Luke !

February 26, 1911.

The *Intercession*<sup>1</sup> book has arrived—so many thanks—it is in such awbaw binding too. Yes, it must have been horrid saying good-bye to Jack. The concert last evening was quite glorious. I almost wished you had come yesterday—the sunshine was so delicious that even you could not have felt cold at the hockey match which was a violently exciting one, ending in a win for St. —'s. So two nice things happened on one day.

How lovely this February has been as regards weather—if it goes on like this Lent will be much more bearable than usual ! What a lovely story about the dog and cat. We had it at recreation to-day and it was duly admired, though doubts were cast upon its veracity and it certainly sounds rather Spectatorish.<sup>2</sup>

There was a nice clothing the other day of six Postulants. It made me feel very ancient, for I did not know one of them. I don't think I told you of a really beautiful Baptism of two small Jewish children which we had here a little while ago. It was solemn, with incense, and was one of the most beautiful things I ever saw, such an object lesson to the children. A Mr. —, the curate of St. — whom they are sending out to Canada, came down to baptize the children as he knew their mother. The whole story of her and

<sup>1</sup> *Intercessions for Common Use*, a charming book compiled by the Mother of the Community of the Epiphany, O.M.C.

<sup>2</sup> A story of a cat who was fondly attached to a dog. The dog was taken to a vet. for an operation, and died; at the moment of his death, the cat uttered a cry and expired.

## After Her Profession

them is exceedingly interesting; I must tell you about them some time. The Jewish relations are offering to support Mother and children if she will bring them up as Jews; so we are trying to raise money to support them here as Christians.

*March 9, 1911.*

Acts xx. 35: This beatitude is one of the sayings of our Lord which were current in the early Church besides those preserved in the Gospels. Some of them have come down to us through various channels, and probably St. Clement of Rome is giving another form of this saying when he writes to the Corinthians that "once they were humble-minded—more gladly giving than receiving."<sup>1</sup>

*March 12, 1911.*

It is so nice getting your letters. I do look forward to them and to the enclosures. How sweet of you to help with the little Jews. Of course £5 would help. The mother of the children is really rather extraordinary, because she was dying of consumption in an infirmary when the curate from St. — found her. He had cured himself of heart disease by faith a short time before, and he told her to do the same, and she did, though all the doctors had given her only a few days! We have had this story both from him and from her. His story is equally extraordinary. He had been told that his heart was utterly crocky through overstrain at athletics at Oxford, and that he would be an invalid for life. One day he was turning over the Gospels when he came to a passage about healing, and he thought to himself he didn't see why this should not happen now. He had not

<sup>1</sup> This is a propos of some question I had asked her.



## The Story of an English Sister

heard of the Guild of Health or anything of that kind—in fact, it was before their day—but he set to work silently to pray himself well. Little by little he began to feel better and to do more; and one day he went away for a holiday and was asked to play in a football match. He thought he could hardly do this off his own bat after what he had been told only eight months before, so he went to ask a doctor, who sounded him and seemed extremely surprised at being consulted—so Mr. — told him he had been considered to have a weak heart. “Oh,” said the doctor, “you may possibly have given it a slight strain years ago, but it is perfectly well now!”<sup>1</sup>

March 19, 1911.

Do keep the *Adventure* for me if you have it; or if you buy it do lend it to us; Sister — is as keen about ghosts as I am!

March 26, 1911.

If I were at death's door or likely to become so no doubt I should be sent home; but alas, I am too robust for there to be any excuse whatever for sending me away!<sup>2</sup> . . .

Yes, I have been reading bits out of *Dulce Domum*. It is not very clearly arranged and one doesn't know always who is being spoken of. When a family spreads to the extent that this one did, there ought to be a genealogical table at the beginning. The *Adventure* is a really remarkable book, isn't it? What pains they must have taken in their historical and topographical researches. I do wonder who Miss

<sup>1</sup> This story is not unlike the plot of Miss Dickens's charming novel, *The Debtor*.

<sup>2</sup> Alas! this was not to be for long.

## After Her Profession

Lamont is. She must be very clever too, and have an extraordinary musical memory. It *is* interesting.

It is rather nice to think work will stop this week. Some of us went to such a delightful performance of the *Pilgrim's Progress* at St. — School yesterday —quite beautiful in parts.

April 2, 1911.

I am feeling immensely excited because we are going to adopt the Wycombe plan of Houses, instead of having girls of the same age together as hitherto. It doesn't sound very exciting, but it is really: I believe it will alter the character of the school, very much for the better. We have had great fun choosing which girls are to be in which House. I have a very nice set. It will be very nice for me having something to do with younger children instead of only having elder girls. I am so *thankful* to have been at Wycombe—so much there was really good and healthy, and it is so nice to be introducing it here. I have been writing to the three head girls of my new House, St. Raphael's, to tell them the news and to exhort them about their new duties. There will be great excitement, no doubt.

Palm Sunday, April 9, 1911.

All the books you have presented or lent to us lately have been highly approved of, especially *Studies in Arcady*! How funny you should mention Mrs. Woods,<sup>1</sup> as I was reading the night before last a quite beautiful poem of hers, the only representative of her poetry in the *Oxford Book of Verse*, not in the least like a woman's poem. Why doesn't she write a lot more? What did Norman and she talk about?

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Margaret Woods, the distinguished poet and novelist.

## The Story of an English Sister

Dear Mr. G.<sup>1</sup>—it is sweet of him to take so much interest; and as so many Catholics don't really understand the principles of the Religious Life it is hardly to be expected that he should. I sometimes think that if we told people like him that it is a case of a direct personal call, like that to the Mission Field, which it is entirely impossible to help answering, they might understand that.

May 11, 1911.

Isn't it hot? This weather must rejoice your heart. I am so glad you are going to get off soon. I do think Yorkshire would be glorious just now. We are feeling a little less rushed. Last week was a real nightmare. . . .

Have you read the interesting article in the *Church Quarterly* about Community Life?—so interesting. I don't agree about life vows not being essential, though. They are the security of stability; though there might be other people attached to the community. I wonder who wrote it. . . .

Our magazine this time is really a very nice one. Would you like to take it in? It is 8d. a term. Much of it is written by *me* which should be an inducement. We badly want more subscribers, as we are in debt to the printer. Give my love to the dear Inghams.

Isn't the weather gorgeous? Our orchard is really very beautiful as the apple-blossom is at its very best and the buttercups also.

I have been reading *Pride and Prejudice* again; how absolutely delicious it is. I am sure Norman will get into Christ Church all right.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> An Evangelical clergyman who disapproved of "Sisters."

<sup>2</sup> He did.

## After Her Profession

May 21, 1911.

How truly "scrummy" about the Cup <sup>1</sup>—what a brick you are and how exciting it will be to see it. I will write to Aunt Anne. Did you get it? I suppose you are at Pit now. If it is very cold there don't blame the north, for it has suddenly become freezing here after days of scorching heat. However, this afternoon the sun has once more condescended to reappear.

Those terrible Board of Education Inspectors are coming next week—it is too dreadful for words!

I am reading *The Danvers Jewels* to my House—great excitement! They have just ordered in a lot of nice new books for the fiction library: *The Nebuly Coat*, *Marietta*, *The Palace of the King*, *Rupert of Hentzau*, *Luck of the Vails*, *The Blotting Book*.

May 28, 1911.

I don't seem to be getting enough letters written to you—I am so sorry. Time does not seem to exist at all here. It is no sooner the beginning than it is the end of the day! We are having a very happy term so far. Such a lovely day on Ascension Day. We all went in brakes and wagonettes for a picnic.

Winnie Knox came for a few hours yesterday looking so sweet and pretty and she gets nicer and nicer too.

Our girls have all blossomed out to-day in their new uniforms—so pretty.

<sup>1</sup> I had given a silver cup for which the "Houses" in the School were to compete.

# The Story of an English Sister

June 4, 1911.

Thank you *so* much for the book <sup>1</sup>—how delightful it looks. Do write and tell me if the Miss Jervoises like it, and if W.B.T., etc., are pleased. I think it looks exactly right, but have not been able to do more than glance at it as yet.

We had the Board of Education people last week and they gave us rather a horrid time.

I wonder, if you have one to spare, whether you could lend us one of the Croft books.<sup>2</sup> I rather want to show it to Sister, as the question of suitable Mass music has been coming up lately. We sing the same music that they do at the Home, which means that most of the children don't open their mouths. Also I wonder whether you could let me have for this term Eva Knatchbull-Hugessen's *A Hit and a Miss*. It would go down well in reading aloud. It is not very easy to find a book which suits the whole House, big as well as little girls, but the *Satellite* which Alex sent me, does just splendidly.

June 7, 1911.

I have read the *Memoir* all through now and like it very much, especially your part. I should think all S.M.M.ers will be very pleased. I do wonder if Gerry really is coming home.<sup>3</sup> He is very calm about it, isn't he?

We had almost too hot a Whitsun Monday. Some

<sup>1</sup> A memoir of our beloved Vicar, the Rev. W. H. H. Jervois, which it had been my privilege to write. Mr. Trevelyan contributed a chapter.

<sup>2</sup> One of Mr. Croft's Plainsong Masses, which are sung at St. Matthew's, Westminster, and St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square.

<sup>3</sup> From India.

## After Her Profession

of the more energetic went for a picnic. The rest of us stayed at home and had tea in the hay. I spent an hour reading *In the Palace of the King* to Sister —.

X. came to tea with us yesterday, so we have been very festive. She is exactly the same, as well as possible and ate any amount of cake at tea! She will be 88 in August. She asked after you and Alex and the two little boys, and after the relations of all the Sisters here!

How exciting about the ghosts <sup>1</sup>—do tell me if you hear any more. If only this weather would go on all the summer—how delicious it would be in August. Though I must say I do dread Pit; but I expect the first getting there is the worst. I don't know though, as you say, the whole place must seem to cry out for him.<sup>2</sup>

June 18, 1911.

How nice that the *Church Quarterly* is giving you reviewing. Does it pay? By the way the London Library has been coming in most usefully.

What darlings my nephews must be—I am yearning to see Christopher specially. I am so glad dear A.<sup>3</sup> is better—is she really sleeping now? It is curious (though perhaps noteworthy is a better word) that after you told me she was not sleeping well I prayed that she might and that in your next letter you said she had. Do you know Andrew Murray's *With Christ in the School of Prayer*? I had just been reading there that we should be repaid for asking for *definite* and not general blessings. It is a beautiful book.

<sup>1</sup> Pitcalzean is said to be haunted.

<sup>2</sup> For our dear Ernest.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Ernest Romanes.

## The Story of an English Sister

[I had complained to her of some one's narrow views. I always confided any disappointment or difficulty to her.]

A propos of Miss —, I believe *everybody* is narrow really—we can't help it. There are too many sides of truth for any one to grasp more than one or two thoroughly at a time; and too many interesting points of view and too many things in the world. I am becoming more and more convinced that there are very few people who are not imbecile as regards particular things, each person being imbecile to a different thing or things: *e.g.* when we have blackboard lessons, and the clever little drawing-mistress talks away about the plane and the vanishing lines, and the elevation, etc. I assure you I feel hopelessly imbecile. All the other students understand what she means; and *she* must think *me* remarkably—narrow! which I am. I have not the ghost of a notion what she is driving at. And that (*i.e.* perspective and geometrical drawing) is, alas, not the only thing.

What does the Bishop of Stepney say about the Education Bill?

June 24, 1911.

We are all overjoyed by the arrival and appearance of the Cup—it is a lovely one. I wish you could have heard the children when they saw it. The Cup matches begin next week, and it will be carried out to the Field. We had a happy but uneventful Coronation Day until the evening, when we acted *Bluebeard* out of Lady Bell's book—quite delightful. We are repeating it to-night. We have an excellent Bluebeard and a perfectly delicious Anne. We have

## After Her Profession

always wanted to do that play. I remember at Wycombe trying to get it up; and you used to want to at home, but somehow it never came off. We had three wives hung up behind a curtain which Anne drew back, which added zest.

Continue to send me anecdotes of George Christopher—for if you are a grandmother, I am an aunt.

July 9, 1911.

Isn't it hot? I expect you are revelling in it. It is lovely here. How did the Eton and Harrow go? What fun we shall have at Cambridge.<sup>1</sup> I have just had the time-table sent me.

We have had the first Cup Match, and the Cup came out and sat on the table to watch it. Our House lost you will be sorry to hear, but all hope of the Cup is not yet taken away.

I had a long argument with a lady yesterday about *The Adventure*. She said she was quite sure the whole thing is made up. I thought of the authors sitting down deliberately to tell such a story!

[To Norman and Giles.]

September 24, 1911.

DEAREST BOYS,

I hope you are having a happy time and are not reading and writing *too* much poetry, and that you take a little exercise occasionally. We are winding up the clock, so to speak, always rather a laborious affair. In other words we are in the process of settling 150 people down to three months' work, and time-tables have to be made, thought out first,

<sup>1</sup> Vacation Term of Biblical Study. The otherwise joyous time was saddened by the death of Bishop Paget.



## The Story of an English Sister

then copied, then altered a hundred times to suit various protesters, and at last after about a week everybody is content.

We have this term an enthusiastic Novice working with us whose aim and object in life is to make people read, and read English literature—she cares nothing at all for any other form of education. You would like her very much. So she is full of notions and plans for the campaign. None of the girls at present like reading at all, so it will be interesting to see what happens. She has just been turning out our fiction library and discarding half the books as not worthy of a place there!

Much love to you both. Be good as well as clever, I implore you—it is really so very important.

Your loving

SISTER AND GODSISTER.

*October 15, 1911.*

DEAREST NORMAN,

A word of love and good speed to you. I wonder what you have been doing to-day—Cowley? I envy you beginning your Oxford time! It will get nicer and nicer each term. I expect you have been interviewing your tutor (who is he, by the way?) and settling lectures, etc. I shall imagine you at 5 p.m. this evening in a surplice, or rather, half in one (for if you want to be very correct you can hardly be said to have it *on* at all), listening to your beloved Anglican chants. It is curious to think how changed Christ Church is from what it was in our day—I mean as regards the people—there is hardly a Canon left who was there then—only Dr. Driver. So many have died, and some of them so young.

## After Her Profession

We are going to have Mr. Christopher Stone to sing to us on the 7th. He did just the same as you as regards education — Somerfields, Eton, Christ Church.

I hear you have got unsatisfactory rooms—where are they?

Must stop. Much love from—

FRITZ.

[To me, after her “Rest.”]

October 22, 1911.

Nothing much to tell you of—the weeks whirl round with startling rapidity and every day is filled to overflowing, so that one lives in a state of trying to catch up with time. Sister — is immensely interested in *Mr. Perrin and Mr. Traill*<sup>1</sup>—certainly if it wasn't for the religious side of things it would sometimes be easy to feel a little as those poor people did. But religiousness saves one mercifully; the rule of silence alone is a great preventative.

February 4, 1912.

Mr. Garnier has begun,<sup>2</sup> and he sang Mass to-day at 10.15.

A Miss — is staying at —. She has been a Quaker, then a Churchwoman of the Keswick Convention type; a missionary in China for years and years; then felt her way to Catholicity without any helps; is full of ideas and mystical leanings; and is still feeling her way, as she has not had all she wants in the way of instruction and experience. She has

<sup>1</sup> A very clever story by Mr. Hugh Walpole.

<sup>2</sup> A Mission to the children of the schools, which was preached by the Rev. M. R. Carpenter-Garnier. A most beautiful Mission it was, Ethel told me.

## The Story of an English Sister

been going to your lectures at Wimbledon and is very anxious for the one on the Sacraments and hopes she may speak to you. She insisted on taking me for a walk to-day and poured out literally all her soul! But she is really interesting though odd and out of the way.

*February 11, 1912.*

I am spending my Sunday in bed with rather a heavy cold. It is so disappointing to miss the last of the Mission Services, which have been quite wonderful. I think Mr. Garnier is very happy about them. The children have responded so well; the number and subjects of the thanksgiving were very touching. He allowed anybody to come—unlike the man we had last term who only had the children; so Sisters, mistresses, and maids all came to everything. There was an instruction at 11 every morning on the subject of Sin and the Atonement—the last one was on Confession and quite excellent. Every afternoon at 5.30 there was a Mission Service proper; and we had the Mirfield Mission hymn book. Every morning at 7.30 he said Mass, and all the girls, practically, came; and there was a big corporate Communion on Saturday morning. They finished up by renewing their baptismal vows—all who wished to—and singing the *Te Deum*. It is curious that your Mission <sup>1</sup> and ours should have coincided.

You will be glad to hear that my House has won the Cup! This was inserted as the subject of one of the Thanksgivings at the Mission Service, the happy person being apparently oblivious of the fact that two-thirds of the school would be unable to join with her! So it was omitted.

<sup>1</sup> A Mission at Oxford to women.

## After Her Profession

February 14, 1912.

So many thanks for the notice of Lord Lister which I enormously enjoyed. Wasn't he one of the people the anti-vivisectionists hated? Rather a snub for them, I should think—it is a wonderful account. I had such a nice letter from Winnie Peck just now—so happy.

February 18, 1912.

Thank you so much for the dear little book, *Selections from Mrs. Romanes*; <sup>1</sup> sounds very grand and awbaw, doesn't it? Did you do the selecting or did they? I am rather surprised that they should not have sent me my little book <sup>2</sup> as I think it must be out. I see it is advertised.

Norman came over yesterday afternoon—very cheerful and nice. He told me a most thrilling ghost story. He is lunching at Cuddesdon to-day. The Retreat at the Home was the greatest possible success. Mr. — has won golden opinions from everybody—it seems to have been a most beautiful Retreat. He certainly seems to be a very nice man. He came down to see us on Saturday morning.

I am quite all right now, but I think I must have had a little touch of flue, as it left me more pulled down than an ordinary cold does; and the week of cossetting was very acceptable. I read the *Nebuly Coat* again, while I was in bed. Norman agrees with me in thinking it a really remarkable book.

March 12, 1912.

Such a lovely lecture here by Sister — on Parsifal, illustrated by our little musical Fräulein. They are

<sup>1</sup> *Notes for Meditation*, extracts from my books.

<sup>2</sup> *Lent Readings*.

## The Story of an English Sister

both steeped in Parsifal. I could wish I had been at Baireuth!

*March 17, 1912.*

So many thanks for your long letters and enclosures. Lent will soon be over now. I feel as if I had lots to tell you and hardly know where to begin. I wrote to you properly a fortnight ago and told you of the death of the child, which we had just that moment heard of. Afterwards we had the most touching descriptions of her death, quite like a story book. She hadn't been a particularly good child, rather unresponsive and apparently quite indifferent to religion and untouched at the time of her Confirmation, and during her illness was fretful and exacting; but 24 hours before she died she was told by her father, a Priest, that she could not get well, and then began what can only be called her conversion. I believe it was a most wonderful experience for those watching her, but we have not been told everything—it was too sacred and tremendous. Anyhow she made her confession and became exactly like a quite little child, full of the most extraordinary vital faith. She seemed to be so strangely glad to go, from the very first, and intensely disappointed when a glimmer of hope came a few hours before death. And all this happened in the midst of the most extreme agony. What a wonderful thing the Catholic Faith is. This girl had imbibed it with her mind only until that time. "You won't mind very much, Mummy," she said to her Mother, "we shall meet at Holy Communion." I feel rather like dear Auntie in recounting all this; but it was a very wonderful death.

## After Her Profession

*Easter Day, 1912.*

Many thanks for your letter, greetings, and promise of Bishop King's *Life* and choes. How lovely to think of Gerry coming to-morrow. He must ask the way at the station as I can't meet him. I think the best plan would be for you to come with Giles, as after the 22nd we shall be in the throes of getting ready again for the girls, and this is our really Festival week when we can frivol with relations with a good conscience! If it suits you, that is. How jolly to be going a-motoring with Gerry—I can hardly imagine anything nicer! I had a letter from Nan to-day; you can guess its main topic.

We have had a lovely Easter Day. Low Mass at 8; Sung Mass at 10.15; Solemn Vespers and Procession here at 5. In the afternoon the holiday children and the old girls had an egg hunt. We hid packets of sweets and Easter eggs in the garden. It was great fun. If you get this before Gerry starts do you think he could bring with him *In Our Convent Days*?<sup>1</sup> I think it would amuse us in Easter week; and I hardly think there could be any objection to it!<sup>2</sup>

*April 17, 1912.*

Delighted to see Giles to-morrow. Hoped to have got a letter off to you to-day, but have not succeeded! How appalling this is about the *Titanic*—the most appalling thing of its kind that has ever happened, I suppose. One can think of nothing else. We had such a delightful picnic yesterday with the other School Sisters—right up to some beautiful woods which later on will be carpeted with bluebells. We

<sup>1</sup> A delightful book by Miss Agnes Repplier.

<sup>2</sup> On account of it being a Roman Catholic book!

## The Story of an English Sister

started at 10.30 and did not get back till 6; had dinner and tea out. They took a carriage for the weaklings. Did you see the eclipse?

April 19, 1912.

Had such a nice day with Giles. I expect he has told you about it—very lazy indeed! So many thanks for *Times's*, etc. I suppose we shall read the real story about the *Titanic* to-morrow.

April 21, 1912.

No, one can't get the *Titanic* out of one's head. I suppose you can imagine it all better than I can, having lived on one of these ships; but I seem to see it all too; the accounts are so graphic. It is beautiful to think of the millionaire deliberately giving up his place to an unknown woman—did you see that? He was *in* the boat when she appeared and he got out at once. Perhaps this was his great opportunity for atoning for much selfishness—he was a divorced husband, wasn't he? and not specially nice, I should think, with £40,000,000; if so, he certainly took it (the opportunity). Did you see any other paper than *The Times*? The latter is a little too dignified on these occasions and is above getting individuals' accounts; but these are extremely graphic and moving—*e.g.* the account of the under-operator in the wireless telegraphy of how Phillips worked the wireless. Did you see, too, about Lady Rothes and how she took command of one of the boats and rowed, because the men in it were only stewards and did not know how to? This time last week they were all alive.

## After Her Profession

*May 12, 1912.*

Not much to relate—I am so glad you are having such a nice time and seeing so many nice people. Norman came out here yesterday and we had a very pleasant talk in the orchard and we had tea together there. He is looking so handsome with a lot of curly hair.

Did you hear that that old Mother of the Convent at Oxford has died. She was 94 and had been professed 70 years! Sister —— told me; she used to be at school there, and was a Novice there too afterwards.

We are going to have a Rogationtide Procession on Tuesday round the house and garden, starting from Chapel and arriving there again.

I must end up as it is tea-time, and I feel quite like Gerry<sup>1</sup> to-day—that there really is no more to say!

*May 17, 1912.*

Where are you now? I have been waiting to write, expecting a line from you in the middle of the week. My chief news is that the Women's Diocesan Association has asked me to lecture at their Summer Camp at St. Hugh's during the week beginning July 15th; five lectures—one each day at 12. They are to be on St. Paul. I tried to get out of it and let it be Sister ——, but Mother was very “contrairy” about it. Would you like to come to Oxford then and put me up? —— thinks that would be a good plan. If you couldn't manage it, I could stay with Sister X. at Cowley. Could you tell me of or send me any books for the lectures? The idea is to lecture on

<sup>1</sup> Gerald was gently chaffed by his family for ending home letters so often in this way.



## The Story of an English Sister

St. Paul's personality as we get it in the Epistles; so I thought I would take it like this—

1. St. Paul the Man (*i. e.* his personal characteristics);
2. St. Paul the Missionary;
3. St. Paul the Master-mind (theologian, statesman, etc.);
4. St. Paul the Mystic;
5. St. Paul the Martyr;

and connect each of the last four lectures with one of the groups of Epistles—

2. with Thessalonians;
3. with Romans, Corinthians, etc.;
4. with Ephesians, etc.;
5. with Imprisonment letters.

The first lecture would be introductory. You could tell me of books for Lecture 4. The lectures were to have been given by Mrs. Carter who died in the *Titanic*.

Yes, do send me Mr. Roland Allen's book on *St. Paul's Missionary Methods*.

June 8, 1912.

I suppose you are going to Eton to-morrow. I do hope it will be fine and that you will get a good view of Giles in the Boats !

I have finished Lecture 2—Mr. Allen was a godsend. What he says at the end disarms criticism (as to our natives being less workable than his converts)—it is a wonderful passage on the power of the Holy Spirit. Many thanks for Mr. Goudge <sup>1</sup>—he will come

<sup>1</sup> On First Corinthians, by the present Principal of Ely Theological College.

## After Her Profession

in for Lecture 3, and I shall attack him to-morrow. I do have such lovely times at the Sanatorium. The dear old Scotchwoman, who is caretaker, takes great care of me; gives me a fire when it is cold and makes me such beautiful Scotch teas! I go over for the whole afternoon and evening once or twice a week and at other times for shorter periods.

I went for a walk with Sister — to-day. She was full of a meeting she had been to about the training of missionaries. The funny part is that much of what they had said I have put into the lecture—all that isn't Mr. Allen—about deepening the spiritual life of intending missionaries; and the *Church* sending people out.<sup>1</sup>

I had such a nice letter from Norman with a p.s. written by Willie,<sup>2</sup> who said he was at present studying the Gospel of St. John, "which is really quite interesting," and ending "yours religiously."

Alex sent me some delicious snowdrops and violets.

*June 9, 1912.*

We had such a lovely Profession. The Bishop<sup>3</sup> was quite beautiful. The whole thing was so lovely—such a beautiful atmosphere. I could not wait after the Service; the Bishop had sung the Mass, so I knew he would have to have his breakfast, and then perhaps, after all, might not think of asking for me. But I no sooner arrived down here than I heard from some one who had started just after me that he had asked for me and that there had been a hue and cry

<sup>1</sup> She means not societies, such as S.P.G., C.M.S., etc.

<sup>2</sup> Norman's dearest of all his dear friends—at Eton and Oxford; now in the Royal Sussex Regiment.

<sup>3</sup> Bishop Gore.

## The Story of an English Sister

after me just after I had gone! However, virtue did not suffer in this case, as in the afternoon the Vicar brought him round to call on Sister —, who however was out, so I did the honours and showed him the Chapel, and he looked in on the children at tea: he was so dear and kind, and said I was to be sure and tell you that he had seen me! I hope he is none the worse for the Profession—it was two hours long.

[After her rest in Scotland, she stayed for a few hours in our Flat.]

12 *Harley House*,  
September 8, 1912.

I had, as usual, a most successful and happy journey, with no adventures. I did not see Mr. Scott<sup>1</sup> again till he got out at Kingussie, and then I got out too for a little air. The dinner basket was very good; hot chicken and potatoes. I greatly enjoyed *Anthea's Guest*—it is excellent and so humorous.

I hope you had a pleasant journey back<sup>2</sup> and were not too tired and cold. It is so sunny and bright to-day here. All round Peterboro' the floods were very bad—whole fields covered with water, but it looked so picturesque in the sunlight. I go on by the 12 o'clock train feeling much refreshed by my happy rest and comfy journey.

October 6, 1912.

I forgot to tell you I had asked the maids at Harley House to send *The Coward*<sup>3</sup>—it is for one of our girls,

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. W. Scott, Vicar of St. Mary Magdalene, Paddington, who had been staying with us.

<sup>2</sup> I had seen her off at Inverness and returned home.

<sup>3</sup> By Hugh Benson.

## After Her Profession

rather a clever one, who is entering for an essay competition in which all our schools are taking part. One of the subjects is mountain-climbing; so in addition to Ruskin and other such classical writers, I thought a little Hugh Benson would aid her imagination as regards the actual sensations of a mountain-climber.

November 8, 1912.

How nice to think of Alex being with you. It will be jolly to see her next Saturday. Wasn't it odd that on the morning that your letter came describing your visit to Oxford and lunch with the Palmers, I should have had such a vivid dream just before waking of the whole Palmer family—thinking I was going out to tea with them! so much so that my head was still full of Palmers when I opened your letter!

Has Miss Wordsworth's book come out yet? I should so much like to see it. I am still enjoying "Andrew of the brindled hair."<sup>1</sup> One of the very first things I noticed was that he had left out Keble.

November 6, 1912.

Thank you so much for this dear little book.<sup>2</sup> Yes, I like your books very much and quite agree about conforming, etc., if one is at all self-conscious about it—otherwise it would not matter one way or the other. It does not necessarily help people to

<sup>1</sup> Mr. Andrew Lang; a book of his on Literature. The phrase occurs, I think, in a poem by Mr. Kipling, but I cannot discover which.

<sup>2</sup> *Meditations on Passages in St. John*. I had asked what she thought of the advice I had given in one of my books as to conforming to the customs of the church in which one was worshipping in matters of genuflections.

## The Story of an English Sister

understand things—but is more likely to distract and irritate them; and nothing is more distracting than self-consciousness to oneself. Receiving the Holy Communion is not the time for preaching. But if one prefers to do what one has been accustomed to do it is always possible to go to the back of the Church and do it as unobtrusively as possible. Still it is perfectly possible to be devout without genuflecting. I should not have thought it mattered a bit.

[To me at Pitcalzean.]

December 22, 1912.

This brings you a great deal of love and very best wishes for a happy Xmas. I hear from Nan to-day that you have Miss Ward, Fr. Longridge, and three uncles, which sounds very festive. I did not know Miss Ward <sup>1</sup> was to be there—I am so glad. Thank you so very much for these three charming books, which I could not help seeing as Jessie had done them up so that they were peeping out of the brown paper. But I have not opened them yet and shall not until Christmas. I am looking forward to Miss Wordsworth's. I read most of Mr. Douglas <sup>2</sup>—where and when do you think? Last Friday evening in the Flat!! On Thursday night my toothache was so bad again that, at 10 p.m., just as we were all going to bed, Sister said didn't I think it would be sensible to do as you had suggested and go up with Sister — and the girls and try to catch Mr. —. So off we set, I half hoping I might find you still there, as you had been a little doubtful about departing on

<sup>1</sup> Miss Gertrude Ward, author of *Letters from Central Africa*.

<sup>2</sup> *Life of Rev. Arthur Jeffreys Douglas*, of the U.M.C.A.

## After Her Profession

Thursday. . . . The Tableaux on Thursday night were quite exquisite, and the whole thing was most successful, as lots of quite poor people from the town came.

*January 1, 1918.*

A happy New Year to you and all at Pit. I hope you have had a joyous Festival. We had a quiet but a very happy one. It is the first time since I have been here that we have not had holiday children, and it is very nice for a change. We had our usual tea-party, Christmas Tree and games for the retainers and their families—very jolly—on St. Stephen's Day; and we asked the other School Sisters to a party and a little Xmas Tree on St. John's Day, and gave them little presents as we did last year.

Have you heard of a book called *Tryfield*? We have been reading it since Xmas, one of the cleverest books I have read for a long time in the way of psychological study; it is by two people called Hayller, and is about, but not for, children. Sister — told us of it first. You *must* get it; and get it for a journey book—it is very long, another of its advantages.

Many thanks for the delicious choocs and all the other presents.

*Shrove Tuesday, 1918.*

A happy Lent! I hope you got back successfully and got everything done. We worked very hard all that afternoon at *A Joint Household*, and it went off quite well—the parts were not quite perfectly known, but it was such a long piece. We had a little music as well. I have only got a few minutes to write in and I can't think of various things I know I meant

## The Story of an English Sister

to tell you—it's like the game of trying to write down names of poets, ships, etc., against time. Mary Paget is coming to lecture to us sometime on "Leo."

March 2, 1918.

Refreshment Sunday at last! And such a lovely day. Some of our girls have just been up to the Home with a beautiful Mothering cake and violets to Mother. They had made the cake themselves—she was so pleased. So every one is feeling very festive.

I do like *Foundations*, and so does Sister —; and I enormously like that article about it and absolutely agree. The one blot on the book is, of course, Mr. Streeter's feeble argument about the Resurrection—it is so unconvincing. But the whole tone of the book is delightful. Mr. Temple impresses me the most; Mr. Streeter strikes me as being the most brilliant, but Mr. Temple seems to have something great about him. How does the Bishop of Oxford like it? What a magnificent speech his was in the House of Lords on Welsh Disestablishment. I liked my two birthday books very much. What a dear Stephen Paget is.<sup>1</sup>

We have started Girl Guides vigorously, and I am a Girl Guide Captain! We go "tracking" once a week, and there is talk of camping-out next term! I like it because it appeals to all the little ragamuffins and scaramouches of the school and does what I think you say Miss Yonge did for a former generation—makes being good romantic! You have only to appeal to their honour as Guides in order to get them to do anything right. I am afraid Jack

<sup>1</sup> I had given her one of Mr. Stephen Paget's delicious books.

## After Her Profession

might despise our little efforts.<sup>1</sup> I wish he were in England and could come and talk to my little troop!

How nice about the Hobhouses.<sup>2</sup> I should think it would be just what he would like, and it is in such beautiful country; and not too far away from Town and Oxford. Do you know E. V. Lucas's *Life of Lamb*? It is perfectly charming. E. V. L. is so like Lamb himself, I often think.

I wonder if Norman and Giles went to hear Maude Royden speak in the Schools about the Criminal Law Amendment Act—it says 1000 men were there. I do hope they did.

Rather an interesting thought has come to me arising out of my teaching of Christian Doctrine, viz. that children are not only theologians (that I have always believed), but that they are Liberal Theologians. They have modern difficulties—isn't it curious? And it can't be that they hear these things discussed in their homes—their homes are not the kind where such things are discussed. One child, *e. g.* told me she could not see how the doctrine of the resurrection of the body follows from the doctrine of our Lord's Resurrection—since it saw no corruption. This is precisely what Mr. Streeter says.

The resurrection of the body and our Lord's Resurrection are always stumbling-blocks to some one in any class I take; and it is not the old crude difficulties, either, that the children feel; but X., *e. g.*, dislikes the materialism of it. I should like to write an article about it. It is the same with the theories of the Atonement. The liberal explanation of the Atonement is what appeals to them; and

<sup>1</sup> Jack is a great authority on Boy Scouts.

<sup>2</sup> The Rev. Walter Hobhouse, who had been appointed to a Canonry at Gloucester. He is now Archdeacon of Gloucester.



## The Story of an English Sister

anyhow they find that they want an explanation. In my young days I accepted everything I was told with the utmost docility and questioned nothing. It *is* interesting, isn't it? P., who is very outspoken, said she never had been able to understand about that (*i. e.* our Blessed Lord dying for us): "I think it's very muddling, don't you?" So I proceeded to lay before them the various explanations of the Atonement, first asking the class what they thought was the explanation, to which I got an immediate reply from the little girl who acted Alice that time you saw *Alice in Wonderland* here: "Seeing Him loving us so much makes us want to love Him." At the end the verdict was, "I don't like that buying and selling idea at all," whereas, according to the theory that the individual reproduces all the thought epochs of the race, *that* was the very theory that ought to have appealed to a child.

*Low Sunday, March 30, 1918.*

On Easter Eve we had the Blessing of the Paschal Candle at 6, when the Chapel was almost pitchy dark. It was so beautiful—finishing up with Vespers and Procession. Then we all adjourned upstairs and a few of the girls who have rather extra sweet voices sang some of the Cowley Carols. On Easter Day we had Mass at 6.45; and a Sung one in our own Chapel all to ourselves with Procession at 10.15. At 12 we had what is called Reception—a great occasion. Long tables are set out, each House having its own table, the Sisters having one, too, and the Mistresses another; and each person has her pile of Easter letters, parcels, and eggs. The piles are quite big, as this is the day for which girls are

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allowed to buy things for each other and for Sisters and mistresses. I found *Bishop Paget*<sup>1</sup> on my pile among other things. Also a beautiful make-up (acting) box presented to me by the people whom I had coached for *Everyman*. It had rouge, and false hair and flesh-tinting. I thought it a delightful present for a Sister to receive! On the strength of it we settled to begin on *Ali Baba* at once, which I still think the best of Lady Bell's—it is delightful. So we shall do it on Tuesday night—the last night of term. I wish you could be there, as it is going to be really good.

We did *Everyman* on the Saturday of Passion Week, after working at it for exactly a week. We cut all the long dull speeches. It was beautiful. We suddenly discovered that there was a hole in the stage in exactly the right spot—a trap-door; so we had the end quite correctly. There was some good music—strings and harmonium behind the scenes—Bach chiefly. We happened to have a set of girls who I felt would do the whole thing very impressively, and they certainly were wonderful. The Hall was packed, so much so that our girls could not get in at all, and we had to do it again for them afterwards. Yet you could not hear a cough or a shuffle or movement of any kind. It was a great advantage to have seen *Everyman* in town so often; I had seen it five or six times, you know. We have about four girls who speak very well, with fine resonant voices, and the girl who took *Everyman*'s part is striking to look at as well. We think we must do it again next year if we have the right people to act; also the *Bethlehem Tableaux*. They do really impress people, I think.

<sup>1</sup> *Life of Bishop Francis Paget*, by his brother, Stephen Paget.

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April 4, 1918.

The children got off on Wednesday, and we have a nice leisurely holiday feeling. We had a delightful performance of *Ali Baba* on the last night and an appreciative audience. P— made a perfectly charming Abdullah; and D— was Cassim and was killed in the cave by some terrible-looking robbers who had been finely made up out of my new make-up box. It was great fun and I was rather pleased that so many of the actors had been in *Everyman* just before and showed themselves quite equal to this new occasion.

On Wednesday I meet Sister — at the Flat and we go to our old girls' meeting that afternoon, and the next morning to visit a school at Sydenham. You won't be back, will you? I couldn't quite make out.

Giles has sent me such a pretty card from Florence.

May 5, 1918.

How interesting the *Church Quarterly* is this time. I do like Dr. Headlam's articles. He is so balanced and sane. He rather hits at *Lux Mundi*, though. I agree with you about the Vacation Term. I don't think it is very attractive. We break up on the 29th July. I almost think it would be better to combine the Dante Lectures<sup>1</sup> with the Retreat.<sup>2</sup> I think Mother might say it was a little often if you came at Whitsun!!

[Anniversary of my husband's death.]

May 23, 1918.

Just a little line to tell you that I do not forget him or you to-day. We had a lovely Corpus Christi

<sup>1</sup> I had been asked to lecture on Dante.

<sup>2</sup> A Retreat which I was going to attend.

## After Her Profession

Day yesterday. (By the way, it must have been this ecclesiastical week 19 years ago.) We went an expedition to a farmhouse to-day—the whole school—starting at 11 a.m. and getting back at 8 p.m.; taking lunch and tea. Most of the party walked, but there was a brake and the donkey-cart for weaklings. The country was too beautiful for words—gorgeous clumps of whins in full blossom; woods with carpets of bluebells and ragged robins and violets. Lovely, lovely distant views; it was quite too beautiful.

*May 26, 1918.*

I am reading *Marriage*<sup>1</sup> at intervals; it is good and amusing. Do get it—I have rarely read anything so clever. I did not know Wells wrote so well. He has shown up the fruits of what he calls “dead Anglicanism” very effectively. I wonder whether he will end in “auntie’s”<sup>2</sup> bosom. Aunt Plessington’s speech is superb. How you will enjoy it!

*June 8, 1918.*

Sister — and another Sister and I went for a dear little picnic up into a darling little wood, one day when we had some spare time. It has been so glorious this early summer. Certainly people in town do miss a great deal at this time.

Yes, wouldn’t a little house in the country in *England* be nice !!

*June 20, 1918.*

Thank you *so* much for this lovely Office Book<sup>3</sup>—it is what I have been coveting in my heart of hearts

<sup>1</sup> By Wells.

<sup>2</sup> Mr. Jervois often called the Church of Rome our Aunt.

<sup>3</sup> I had given her a well-bound Office Book, which is now in my room with the markers just as she left them in the week of the Eleventh Sunday after Trinity, 1914.

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for a long time ! I only hope it will not be considered too grand for me to have. My other one is not only falling to bits, a defect which could be remedied, but it has also somehow got so dog-eared and dirty. I don't think that the paper can be very good, and red edges are such a help.

Much love and many thanks for the Office Book.

June 28, 1918.

Is Marjory's <sup>1</sup> wedding to-day, by any chance ? I know you said it was to be in June, but I never heard the date. We had a good concert on Saturday. The programme included Schumann's Pianoforte Quintet in A Flat—lovely. Miss Margaret Bridges, the daughter of Mr. Robert Bridges, played the viola. Mr. F. Stone sang, and played the 'cello. He is a real musician. These concerts are delightful : nobody comes to them unfortunately.

Yes, I saw about Lord Northampton.<sup>2</sup> I see most things, as *The Daily Graphic* is pinned up every day. There was a good and recent picture of him, but he looked so much older—quite grey.

June 29, 1918.

How glorious this sunshine is. June in the country is exquisite. We spend as much time as possible out of doors.

You will be glad to hear that I play in the School Orchestra which has just been started. The fiddle <sup>3</sup> is in excellent condition, as I let our really very musical violin mistress use it, which keeps it in good order and improves her playing at concerts at the same time.

<sup>1</sup> Miss Marjory Murray, now Mrs. Charles Younger. Alas ! her husband fell in France, 1917.

<sup>2</sup> Our friend the Marquess of Northampton's death.

<sup>3</sup> I had lent her my husband's violin.

## After Her Profession

July 4, 1918.

I am reading Mr. Hobhouse's book <sup>1</sup> (not your copy!—we have got hold of one somehow) and like it *so* much.

July 7, 1918.

How sad about Mr. Alfred Lyttelton, isn't it? Is that Oliver's father? Have you seen Christopher Stone's *Letters to an Eton Boy*? They are so clever. Quite a nice though worldly mother, and such a nice uncle. I am glad N. and G. were not a bit like this Eton boy. We have not been able to get on with our chicken-pox cure, as the rain has come in such torrents. We had a rather damp picnic on Saturday, since which I have never felt really warm! But yesterday and to-day even we did not venture.

There is such a charming story by Winifred Peck in this month's *Treasury*. Also an article on Michael Fairless. Have you seen her *Life*?

<sup>1</sup> *The Bampton Lectures for 1909*: "The Church and the World in Idea and in History."

## CHAPTER VIII

### INDIA—THE RETURN HOME—THE FINAL TRIAL

IN July 1918 I went to the Retreat at her Community. We were looking forward to a peculiarly happy summer. Nearly all of us were to be together, which had not happened since Christmas 1906; I was to inhabit Dunskaith, which now belonged to Gerald, we were to have motor-cars, dear friends staying with us, and everything we could wish: so we had, but one gloomy cloud overshadowed it all. On coming out of Retreat, I was told by some one that Sister Etheldred wanted me to go down to the school without waiting for her to fetch me. I went, and on the way I met her, and she broke to me as well as she could that it had been decided she should go to India for two years, not more. Looking back it is strange to me to recollect how completely shattered I was, and months afterwards Etheldred herself told me that she felt more knocked over by the request to go to India than she did when she was told she was mortally ill. Somehow both I and a very dear friend of Etheldred's never could be buoyant or look forward to her return. The one hope that buoyed me up during that time was that something would happen to make the "authorities" change their minds. Yet I never remonstrated. Whenever I sat down to argue it out with myself it was so reasonable that as the Community had a great appreciation of her gifts the authorities should think it well that she

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

should see all sides of their work. She was a very young Sister, it seemed right she should not spend her whole working years in one place; India was so interesting, and so on. Every one was as kind as possible, and after all even two years was a very short space. My soldier son, who was due, as he thought, to return to India early in 1915, proposed I should go out with him and bring her home. And Etheldred herself never gave way, was always cheerful and cheering, but I have reason to believe her heart was broken. Whether the fatal disease of which she was so soon to die was already undermining her, and preventing her natural joyousness I cannot say. But she could not look forward with any pleasure to India. We did have a bright month together in Scotland, we enjoyed a great deal of motoring, and she saw many people whom she liked. Our dear friends, the late Master of the Temple (Dr. Woods) and his wife, the illustrious poet and novelist, were with us and various cousins, and above all her favourite brother Gerald, and the "boys" home from Oxford. Only our dear Jack was away. I did not see that she was not well, but I have since discovered that she did tell some one (I forget whom) that she got breathless when going up-hill, and our Nannie thought her looking very delicate.

If I had only known even this I think I should have begged that she might have stayed at home, and she certainly would not have been sent. And all this seems strange to me, for earlier in the summer she wrote of running up hills. She went back to her Community at the beginning of September and I joined her at the end of the month. We had a merry picnic on St. Michael's Day, and she then seemed very well, and walked and ran with all her usual vivacity.



# The Story of an English Sister

[After our last happy summer together.]

*September 7, 1918.*

Everybody is very kind and sweet and it is nice to get back into Community life; but it was horrid having to leave Dunskaith and everybody! We did have a lovely time, didn't we? I had to narrate some of our experiences at recreation to-day.

*September 14, 1918.*

We had one of the most beautiful Retreats I have ever been in—the most beautiful, I think, except perhaps Father Russell's, which is a long time ago now. This one was taken by Father William, from Plaistow. I had never heard of him before; a little elderly monk, who directly he opened his mouth you knew was a saint. He took the first few verses of the second chapter of the Song of Songs. There wasn't a jarring note the whole time; he was perfectly simple, highly mystical, intensely practical and absolutely free from eccentricity of any kind, on fire with fervour and having a beautiful mind. So you can imagine how lovely it was. I do feel attracted by what I hear of that Plaistow Community. This Fr. William is longing to be allowed a plot of ground by the Government on which to build a house for lepers, of whom there are about 400 in England, so that the Fathers can nurse and look after them. So far Government has not consented. I like that kind of religion. Do remember Fr. William if ever you get a chance of being in Retreat with him.

I suppose from Miss Bailey's <sup>1</sup> letter that now you

<sup>1</sup> My friend Miss Latham Bailey, with whom I was to stay when I saw her off to India.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

are rather thinking of not coming here but of going to Liverpool only. My feeling is, the less agony the better! Perhaps Liverpool would be less agonising than the week-end here. I think both would be almost too much of a good thing!

I went on to Liverpool to stay with my kind friends the Baileys, and on the fourth of October her two Oxford brothers and I met her at Birkenhead and went on the small boat in which her passage and that of another Sister who was going out with Etheldred had been taken. I shall never forget how my heart sank at the sight of the tiny ship and the tiny second-class cabin into which the two Sisters and a woman and her child were to be stowed. At any rate I could mend this, and I dashed over to the first-class quarters and contrived just in time to get Etheldred and the other Sister transferred to a small cabin which they had to themselves in the first class. I never remember anything giving me more pleasure than seeing the Sisters take possession of the not too luxurious quarters, and *how* we ran backwards and forwards with their bags and small possessions. In the middle the bell rang and we had to go on shore. The dock gates closed to with a sort of dramatic effect, and shut out the view of the ship as they closed. Etheldred was standing on the deck looking down on me, it was the last time I ever saw her in health and vigour.

Little did I dream that in less than four months I should see her again, but in what a different state.

Her Indian letters are full of interest. I wrote to her every day and posted my letter every week. I think my letters gave her great pleasure. In the winter I had an unexpected and extremely kind

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invitation to lecture in New York, Boston, and Philadelphia in the Spring of 1914, and I remember thinking how this tour in America would help me over some of the months of her absence.

*S.S. City of Sparta.*

*October 4, 1918,*

*6.30 p.m.*

DEAREST MOTHER,

I thought you would like to have a little line, although not very much has happened yet. You can't think how grateful we are for our new cabin. We went to fetch some of our things from the old one, and there was the little girl in bed making a good deal of noise—so we thanked and blessed you inwardly and to each other. We are now sitting in the First Class Saloon writing. It is so pretty to watch the lights of Liverpool in the darkness, but we want to get letters off and hear we can do so if we write before nine. I found such a quantity of letters after you left, and a parcel and letter from Gerry, the latter most amusing. I haven't opened the parcel yet, as I want to get this written. We are gradually collecting our goods which are scattered in a good many parts of the ship now! How horrid those closing doors were. Some people got in front of them, and afterwards a good many people seem to have run round in front in order to get another wave. Did you? I wasn't quite sure in the darkness that I didn't make you out, so waved on the chance. There is no motion at all at present, and I am well drugged;<sup>1</sup> also I am keeping St. Raphael's Feast, so am hoping for the best.

<sup>1</sup> Our friend Mr. Turner, F.R.C.S., had given her a prescription to ward off sea-sickness. I have found it infallible.

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Very much love to you, Miss Bailey and Giles,  
from your very loving—

FRITZ.

*Saturday, 9.30 p.m.*

It must have been the bromide which made me forget to give you this : Sister —, the returned Indian Sister at school, did it for me the day you gave your Dante lecture !<sup>1</sup>

We are still in the Mersey and are come to a standstill. We had an excellent dinner, and otherwise have done nothing but write and read letters.

[This letter to Mrs. James Peck (Miss Winifred Knox) comprises all that Etheldred wrote at greater length to me.]

*S.S. City of Sparta,  
Indian Ocean.*

*October 26, 1918.*

MY VERY DEAR WIN,

How dear of you to cheer me thus on my way ! I got your first letter at Naples and your second at Port Said ; not the wire. I expect " Miss Romanes " was beyond them. It *does* warm the heart to get letters like yours, dear Win, and it is sweet of you to think of it. I always feel as though I need not describe my sensations to you at all—you seem to know them already ! The Liverpool part might have been much horrid, only Mother was so splendid, and of course she had the boys to go away with. It wasn't like leaving her stranded, and it was nice that she was staying with a really kind friend at Liverpool. Also she was kept busy all the time on the boat with

<sup>1</sup> The line, " E la sua volontade è nostra pace," beautifully written on a card.

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trying to get us transferred from 2nd to 1st class, as she didn't like the look of our accommodation (and we have blessed her ever since, as this is a very small ship); just the last moment was rather horrible—they swung to great doors which hid us from our friends even before the boat started—and when we were quite near to them. What a long time it seems since then! We have really had a delightful voyage on the whole, though there were some bad days after Naples and again in the Red Sed; and in spite, too, of its being rather long. We shall have had 26 days of it; and after three weeks one begins to look forward to the end and to grow a little weary of one's fellow passengers, and of the food, and the bright dazzling sea, and the smuts and the being two in a cabin! But all the first part was as you say a real adventure. I have been taking a course of Stevenson and Jane Austen—the latter I read aloud to Sister —, who fortunately enjoys her. We had a whole day at Naples, and we contrived a hurried visit to Pompeii; so that was a real adventurous day, as I had never been to Naples and not often to Italy, and it was all so beautiful and squalid and picturesque and full of life and colour and, I should think, roguery. We got in quite early, and I shall never forget the look of the Bay, as we came on deck, in the morning light with the mist just lifting and clearing above the dazzling blue. Vesuvius kindly smoked a little for our benefit; as we wound along at his foot in a little train on our way to Pompeii. I am glad to have seen this last. The next exciting thing was Port Said, when one *felt* the clash of East and West; but I enjoyed much more the Suez Canal and the glow of an Eastern sunset on the hot desert plain, and the sedate camels walking on the tow path (so to speak)

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with their masters; and I enjoyed being held up and tied to the bank to let another ship go by; it was dark then, and I shall never forget the effect of the lighted ship bearing down on us over the dark water with the glow of the sunset behind. We passed the road, which is crossed by the canal, one of the oldest in the world, which leads from Palestine into Egypt, and by which Joseph and his brethren probably went into Egypt; and another Joseph too flying from Herod. The Red Sea was too hot and rough—there was a hot tearing wind blowing most of the time; and one could not sleep for heat at night, and sea-sickness assailed one by day. Still it was thrilling to say one's Office in which the Red Sea Psalms occur. And we knew in one place that we were not far from Mecca.

It is delightful now—like a warm summer's day with a cool breeze. We took to white habits the day after I got your Port Said letter, and they are very nice except that they have a way of suddenly blowing up over one's head! They are lighter and more ample than the black ones, I suppose. There is a particular staircase which is most dangerous; as puffs of wind are always racing up and meeting one, and my hands are full of bags, books, etc., and I am quite helpless. Otherwise they are acceptable. We have been able to have Mass on board every Sunday except the first, and also on St. Luke's Day, and we shall again on SS. Simon and Jude. There is such a nice specimen of a Padre on board, a young Welshman, very simple and good, who is going over to work in connection with the Delhi Cambridge Brotherhood. We have several missionaries on board. One is a youth, an American, who has been at Ch. Ch. and read Greats; and I found he had met Jack. Another is

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an old lady, a Plymouth Sister, with whom we have had much entertainment, as we like each other and yet are shocked at each other's form of religion. I gave her Father Congreve's last book to read, as I did want her to see she had not a monopoly of true Christianity and of the Holy Scripture. She is the sort of person who if you—a complete stranger—ask her whether she is travelling alone, replies, "I am never alone," and immediately quotes a text to prove it; and in fact this is the very colloquy which took place between her and the Captain when she first came on board! "Why walk ye mourning before the Lord?" she asked us (I think it comes out of Malachi). But she is a spirited old thing—she can't be young, as she was converted in 1859—and is going out all alone (in one sense) to live alone among a lot of Tommies; having been for some time in S. America trying to convert Spanish Catholics to Protestantism. She made one of our party ashore at Naples, and as she has a real sense of fun, and as funny things happened and we laughed, I think our laughter broke down all barriers between us. There are a number of charming young married couples, each with an infant to whom they are devoted. The Daddys are really quite touching. . . . Now I will just leave the rest of the page for announcing our arrival, as there will not be time to write a whole letter before the mail goes after we get in. . . .

*Oct. 31.*—Here we are at the Convent and your dear letter was given to me safely. I have written rather a full letter to Mother to tell her all about our arriving and have asked her to let you see it, dear Win. I can't get another written to you before mail goes; but it is all, as you say, such a loving welcome, such a wonderful country, and such dear brown sweet

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

people, and everything so different that I feel in a dream.

Your own loving—  
FRITZ.

[To her brother Norman.—She thought we were to be at Pitcalzean and that Father Longridge would be with us.]

*India.*  
*December 12, 1918.*

DEAREST NORMAN,

A very happy Christmas. I hope you will have a jolly vac. altogether and not read *too* hard, as Xmas Vac. and philosophy do not mingle well together, and the only right thing to do is to behave in an entirely babyish and silly fashion; and I hope you will make Giles thoroughly silly for once, just once. He is so young that I know it will be rather difficult. (I was much amused by his description of Mrs. W. and can imagine how such foolishness jarred).<sup>1</sup> Try a few practical jokes on the Father Superior, and take Gerry for your guide; they do these things well in the army. I should like to come to Pit and play the misery game just for one evening.<sup>2</sup> There are a number of conventual miseries, and also Indian ones which I could put down, *e.g.*: "Opening your drawer and seeing a long brown rather sticky looking insect running rapidly away into a dark corner under your clothes, and not having the courage to pursue it though you know it is eating them." "Finding one of your most cherished books spoilt as to its cover by the same insect." "Putting your

<sup>1</sup> Ironical.

<sup>2</sup> The Misery Game consisted in making lists of the minor ills of life one most disliked.



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sponge into your bath preparatory to getting in yourself and seeing the water immediately turn black with swarms of struggling ants, with the result that you have to dispense with your bath altogether." "Being bitten at all times and in all places by mosquitoes." "Being too hot to do anything, and having to teach horrid little girls all the same." "Eagerly awaiting mail day and getting no maternal letter."<sup>1</sup>

Much love, dear Norman. I must stop as it is Vesper time and I want to get some more Christmas letters written before mail goes to-night.

Your very loving—

FRITZ.

*The Convent.*

*December 28, 1918.*

MY VERY DEAR MOTHER,

What delightful parcels! We are *so* grateful—they will be just the thing for the girls. We especially admire *Jan of the Windmill*, and I shall read it to my girls next term. You will be interested to hear that just as the education is 20 or 30 years behind, so are the children's tastes in reading. Miss Yonge has quite a vogue. The Calendars will come in very nicely, as any brightly coloured things do out here. Mail arrived on Saturday just as we were going off to the Convent to live, so I had to take my parcels and letters just as they were in my hands and every one laughed when they saw me arrive with my hands full of postal packets! I got your two letters; the Xmas one first, and it took a great deal of self-control not to open it, for I thought it was the only one.

<sup>1</sup> I had omitted to post my weekly budget on one unhappy Friday.

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The other had been delayed, but was delivered ultimately at the Convent, which you see was where I was, as it happened; so that was a very nice surprise. I really feel quite sentimental over the Flat <sup>1</sup> too; but then I always do over places and houses. We have had such nice times at the Flat, and also such big things have happened since we went there.

These few days before Christmas are quite quiet, but directly after Xmas there are going to be all kinds of treats for the various establishments, and we school Sisters will come in usefully as extra helpers. Yesterday Sister R— and I tied up and named some of the parcels for the Epiphany Hostel children; and I believe we are going to help to make a bran pie and dress up a Xmas Tree (not a fir tree, though) at the Dispensary, where there are a number of children as in-patients. One of them is a babe of a fortnight old who is my goddaughter. Her name is Tara Lucy. Tara means Star. There were 12 babies baptized on Sunday morning in the Church of the Holy Name, and Tara was one. Each baby had a Sister for a Godmother and one lucky young lady had Mother General for hers. Most of these babies are the sole—or almost the sole—survivors of their families which have been swept off by plague; some of them are so ill themselves (not with plague, of course) that it was doubtful whether they would live through the service. One is supposed to be bewitched and have the evil eye—this generally means that the baby in question has been poisoned at one of the Temples when it was dedicated to the god. We all stood round the great white marble Font—it is used for immersion, but there was a little temporary Font placed on one of the steps for these infant baptisms;

<sup>1</sup> I was leaving the flat where we had lived since 1905.

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and the Indian Priest took the service, of course in Marathi. There was a great crowd, for besides the numerous sponsors, there had been a men's Quiet Day going on, and these men were in church; also some of the school children were there. I am afraid Tara got off without making any promises, as I was so much taken up with holding her that I could not at the same time hold a prayer-book, so got lost in the service and could not remember the order of the responses. But it was a very nice Baptism all the same, and Tara, who isn't ill, smiled sweetly and serenely all the time when she wasn't yawning. Sister — had a charming youth called Samuel, very handsome, with large bright eyes. We have settled that Samuel shall marry Tara when they grow up. Tara is plain, but I am sure she has the makings of a good wife. The Sisters here are such dears; and they have a really wearing life. (It is said that people either *grow* very much out here and become Saints, or else—the reverse.) They are so bright and serene and full of affection.

[To Mrs. James Peck.]

*The School.*

*A Happy New Year,  
January 1, 1914.*

MY VERY DEAR WIN,

How sweet of you to send me *Cripps's Poems*. I have always loved them and we haven't a copy here, and how appropriate they are! The homesick ones exactly express my feelings sometimes, I am afraid! Thank you so much, dearest Win. *Some Loose Stones* I have of course heard of, and I shall be interested to see some day, as I have read *Foundations* (I believe

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on the whole I should agree with *Foundations* !). I hear bits of news about men and books from Norman and Giles; Mr. Rawlinson<sup>1</sup> was giving his opinion about *Some Loose Stones* to Norman the other day !

Nearly all the Sisters are down at the Convent having their Annual Retreat. I and Sister — are having a most restful time. She is one of the real Mission Sisters, who has been out 13 years and now prefers India to England, as she has no relations left to draw her heart back. Her work is teaching women, both Christians and catechumens; she has classes every day, and does a good deal of visiting besides. She speaks Marathi very well and was very effective to-day in her scolding of Herbert, our Christian boy, who deserted us utterly at breakfast this morning and went off to see Parade; and we had much ado to get any breakfast at all. Indians have no idea of time, and they simply don't understand why you should mind having breakfast an hour later than usual: they themselves wouldn't mind waiting two hours, so why should you? We spent Christmas Day down at the Convent, and I can't remember whether I told you anything about it.

On the Sunday afterwards there was a Baptism by immersion of seven people—a man, three boys, and three women. This is far more impressive than our hole-and-corner Baptisms: the large congregation and choir grouped round the great, round, marble Font and the shivery entrance into the water, and kneeling down in it—waist deep—and the getting out again all dripping and then reappearing, white, dry and radiant, holding a lighted candle—to receive the sign; the whole service is Marathi, of course: Father — in a violet and then a white cope. I must not write

<sup>1</sup> The Rev. A. C. Rawlinson, Christ Church, Oxford.

## The Story of an English Sister

more because I have so many kind people to write and thank for Christmas greetings.

Much love, dearest Win, from your—

Fritz.

[She sailed three days after the following letter was written. She was feeling ill when it was written.]

January 28, 1914.

Most of this week has been spent in getting ready for school, but there have been one or two incidents to break the monotony. The Sister Superior was formally installed on Wednesday. Later on in the morning Father Maxwell came to call, but I was unfortunately out and missed him. In the afternoon of the same day there was a function at the Hospital (which is in charge of our Sisters, you know)—the laying of the foundation-stone of a new Chapel. To this function we were bidden, and I was asked specially to help with the singing. A great many Priests were there; the Priest in Charge of the Camp Church was to do the deed as representing the Bishop; and Father Maxwell<sup>1</sup> and Father Nicholson were both present.

Ethel's letters to me from India are full of interest and minute description, and evince her keen insight into character and her unfailing optimism. She took a most hopeful view of the children she was among, and was eager to introduce self-government, *esprit de corps*, and such like qualities in the school. I have omitted most of these letters, as they are too intimate for publication, but they are to me almost the most touching of all her letters, for she was feeling ill, depressed and intensely homesick. She did not

<sup>1</sup> Superior of the Society of St. John; died 1916. R.I.P.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

respond to the spell of India and longed for England with sick longing. I cannot be thankful enough that she was sent home before she was too ill to travel.

In January 1914 I had left my London flat intending to move into a house in June after my time in America. I was at the Sesame Club on the 14th of January, when a cable was handed to me: "Etheldred returning in *Arabia*, all well." Even then I remember that a sort of terror came over me, but after a time I began to think that she was recalled to take the place of a very important Sister who had been obliged to rest for a time. My one dread was that she would arrive after I had sailed. On January 28 or 29 I had a telegram from Marseilles, saying the party would arrive at the Mother House on January 31. I was going to Oxford to say good-bye to the two at Christ Church and Magdalen, and I telegraphed to her I would go over to her on Sunday. Giles motored me over on Sunday afternoon, and I shall never forget my first sight of Etheldred, she came in coughing and wheezing and bent as if she were an old woman. I could not stay very long, but I took counsel in Oxford and secured the best medical advice I could get. I went back to her on Monday, and found her rather better. It now appeared that she had been tormented by a cough even before she arrived in India, and this had made the Community uneasy; the Mother who had arrived on a visit felt even more uneasy, but still Ethel had seemed well. On almost the last day of the Reverend Mother's stay she set up a temperature; the doctor detected a slight affection of the lung—and the Mother resolved to take her back: a blessed decision indeed, but still no one, unless it was Etheldred herself and one other Sister, thought of danger. She seemed quite well on the voyage, but the journey across

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France produced this cough and wheezing. Still no one thought of any immediate danger. After much consultation it was thought that I ought to keep my engagement in America and let Etheldred go up to Scotland to her sister-in-law. Personally I regret much that she was not left in peace with her Community until I came home. But every one thought that it was merely a slight affection of the lung, that the breathlessness and cough were two results of cold caught on the journey, and that the keen air of Scotland would work wonders. I was starting on the 14th, my passage was taken. My friend, Miss Bailey, who had made the delightful suggestion that she should accompany me, had taken hers, the American Committee who had arranged for lectures had made everything as smooth and easy for me as was possible; every one, including Etheldred herself, urged me to go, and I did with a sinking heart. However, as will be seen, her letters were cheerful, I hurried through my own programme as fast as possible, gave 24 lectures in five weeks, made many dear friends, and had a delightful voyage home for the second time in the *Lusitania*. When she was barbarously sunk one felt one had lost a dear friend.

*S.S. Arabia.*

*Feast of Conv. of St. Paul, 1914.*

How I wish I could have seen you get that cable ! I was much exercised as to how to let you know without causing you to put up memorial windows at once, which would be such an expense. My first impulse was not to tell you at all, but to burst upon you in all my glory : I thought my healthful appearance would set you at rest at once, whereas a long

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letter all about a cough would give all kinds of squirms. Accordingly I wrote from hospital the letter which I suppose will arrive with this one—just an ordinary mail letter—quite nice; you would never suppose from it that I was in bed in the hospital and had left the school, and was about to leave India for ever! But after I had written and sent it, your letter came with one very disquieting injunction, to wit, that I was to address my letter of the 23rd to the *Lusitania*. I had always supposed that the 14th was the day of your sailing; and my idea was that when I burst upon you I should get several days with you before you sail—we ought to get in on the 7th or 8th. But your injunction looks as if the *Lusitania* sails on the 7th—especially as you talk of “just catching” you. Sister — and I travelled safely to Bombay and met Mother at the Quay. I explained my difficulties to her; and then and there in the hurry and bustle of starting we decided to cable and to make the cable as reassuring as possible.

[To N. H. R.]

*Community House,  
February 14, 1914.*

DEAREST NORMAN,

Many happy returns. I am sorry the pinch of my Lady Poverty forbids my sending you any gift worthy of the occasion; I have not even a book of my own *Poems* on the eve of publication, which, if you are at all like me, you would accept with joy and fraternal pride as a suitable natal gift. I was born, by the way, on Feb. 19th, 1880—not that this has any connexion, of course not, with the preceding sentence—it just happened to come into my head at the moment, I can't think why. I am having a



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delightful time in bed. I am ashamed of enjoying it so much; reading all manner of things. You have never known what it is like to have no time for reading, so will hardly appreciate my delight in having long stretches of hours with nothing to do but to read. I have a delightful mixture of people on the bed—Tagore, George Trevelyan, E. Meynell on “Francis Thompson,” besides reviews and magazines; with De Morgan for light moments. I will let you know when I get up in case you can come and see me before I go north. It is a joy to be in England with the snowdrops and to hear the wind and the robins. You get none of those things in India.

Your very loving—

FRITZ.

Love to Giles. I should be immensely obliged if he would lend me *Sinister Street* for the journey.

February 16, 1914.

DEAREST NORMAN,

So *many* thanks—it is dear of you to spare me a copy and to allow Mr. H. Ransome a place with the other distinguished authors in my room.<sup>1</sup> I have been so interested in reading the poems as I haven't seen any of yours for so long. Which do you like best I wonder? I incline to “Autumn,” but there are several others I admire. “Ballad of May” is charming—(you have left out only “beer” and “jeer,” I think!)—I like its form.

But I have not studied them all yet. Much love,

<sup>1</sup> Norman and an Oxford friend had published a book of their poems under the cryptic title *Athill in Gortland*, by Henry Ransome.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

dear Norman. I will let you know when I am out of bed.

Your loving—  
F.

Who is Henry, I wonder.

[To me in America.]

*Community House,  
February 17, 1914.*

I am very much afraid you *did* have a horrible tossing—it is nice to think that when you get this it will be OVER. It is so calm and lovely now and has been for two or three days, so I hope you are having that now. I am afraid I wrote you a stupid little note for the boat.

I am still in bed, tho' decidedly better. The wheezing came back again, tho' very slightly, and the Dr. says he won't let me get up till that quite disappears, tho' he says he doesn't think he will wait for the temperature which is likely to go on for some time, being slightly up; he wants to get me off, and I probably shall at the beginning of next week. I am in a lovely big room with French windows opening out on to a balcony, and with such a pretty view. Mudie sent me *Francis Thompson* and George Trevelyan's *Garibaldi*, and I have almost finished *Joseph Vance* besides. Norman sent me his poems; and the *Church Quarterly* came, also R. A. Knox's sermons; so I have plenty to read, especially as *Joseph Vance* takes hours and hours. It is a fine book; like Thackeray and Dickens rolled into one, only I like it better than either! Then I have plenty of visitors, so altogether am having a delightful time. It is so nice to have plenty of time to read. I am longing to hear how you got on. R. E. G. may be

## The Story of an English Sister

going to run down for a night this week. What a dear letter the Bishop of London wrote. I am afraid I haven't anything in the way of news, but this brings you lots and lots of love. Your Indian mail came in with a photograph of Braemoray and telling me all about your journey south.<sup>1</sup>

*February 24, 1914.*

I hope you are recovered by now. I can't bear to think what you must have been through. Giles came over the other day and gave fearful accounts of the Atlantic. I am longing to hear all about it. I go north on Thursday night accompanied by Dyce, who will stay a few days at Grantown. Jack turned up one day. The car had gone wrong in France and they had had to come back.<sup>2</sup> So he came to make sure I was being properly looked after, the dear thing. He brought lots of flowers for me and Mother. I am much better already, I am sure, and feel quite fit for the journey. Alex has written such nice letters.

Kikiyu subsides for the present. Bishop F. Z. is very angry with the Archbishop for putting him off with the Council and has written a long letter about it; I forget if this was after you left. The Archbishop replied gently and courteously, and F. Z. replied again.

The Assistant Superior is such a darling—she comes so often to see me, though she must have simply crowds to do and see after. She asked me to help her with the Monthly Letter; so I wrote the first part about India.

<sup>1</sup> To Exeter, where I had been speaking.

<sup>2</sup> Jack had started on a motor tour through Italy and France.

# India—Return Home—The Final Trial

Braemora,  
March, 1914.

Mr. Black gave me my Communion this morning; also to George.

I expect you have heard of Dr. Driver's<sup>1</sup> death. There is no Canon left now who was there when we lived in Oxford. He was 68. Another sad death is that of Patrick Sellar's<sup>2</sup> eldest son at Fettes of measles, a boy of 16 and a very nice one, Dyce says. P. N. W.<sup>3</sup> is the next Hulsean lecturer.

By the way I keep forgetting to say thank-you for the dear little book on Jane Austen. I read it with much pleasure; and now some one, I think Giles, has sent me Austen Leigh's *Life* of her—not the new one, but the 1869 one; it is a charming book.

The view from the window is so lovely and the weather has been delightful ever since I came.

Heaps of love. I hope before I next write to get something from you.

March 16, 1914.

Your letters have now begun to fall thick and fast, which is very pleasant and a great change after India. I hope you are getting mine all right. Yours has just come describing the snowstorm—it must be the one we read of in the papers. I wonder if it prevented your lectures at all. It is very nice hearing of your starting *this month* for England! I do hope you will be pleased with what we've done. We've taken Moray Park from April 1st for six months.

So glad you have had such nice audiences and friends. Americans certainly are charming people. Do they discuss at all after the lectures?

<sup>1</sup> The eminent Professor of Hebrew.

<sup>2</sup> Nephew of Professor William Sellar, so well known by his books on Virgil, etc. Mrs. William Sellar is hardly less well known. She died as these sheets were passing through the Press.

<sup>3</sup> Father Waggett.

## The Story of an English Sister

Both Tony and Fluff <sup>1</sup> spend a good deal of time with me, and Walter is a frequent and charming visitor. Of George <sup>2</sup> I have seen nothing, but we exchange offerings now and then.

There was a fearful scene in a hall in Glasgow the other day when Mrs. Pankhurst was addressing a Suffragist meeting. A hundred policemen, some from London, came to arrest her, and there was a regular fight. She was taken back to Holloway the next day, hunger-striking.

Won't it be fun when you come back!

Canon Rhodes Bristow, who had been ill for a long time, has died, and *The Scotsman* says "he had always expressed a wish to die in harness, and his wish was fulfilled, as his end was quite peaceful." What do you suppose that means?

[I arrived on April 12, and found her fairly well and very cheerful, but still in bed with an obstinate temperature. I had to go away for a few days. She wrote—]

April 27, 1914.

Mudie has now sent *Mother Mabel Digby*, which you will enjoy—quite a fat book. She seems to have been a wonderful person. I have been browsing on Mrs. Woods;<sup>3</sup> how very great she is.

April 30, 1914.

Just got your letter about Oxford. The river must have been lovely. Do you see the Bishop of Southwark's memorial to Convocation?

Love to the dear Bishop.

<sup>1</sup> A dog and a cat.

<sup>2</sup> Her elder nephew was ill at the time with pneumonia.

<sup>3</sup> Mrs. Margaret Woods. Fritz means the *Collected Poems* of Mrs. Woods.

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On returning I found my darling in bed, but not apparently very ill. Only her temperature would not come down to normal. At last a symptom appeared which alarmed me horribly, and much against the doctor's will, but much to Etheldred's delight, I took her up to London.

An aggravation of our unfortunate circumstances was that I had no house in town. I had given up the one I had intended to live in, as the doctors had thought Etheldred would probably spend the winter abroad. Fortunately my third son, Jack, had taken a flat in Victoria Street, and with the generosity that is characteristic of my boys he put it at our disposal. We arrived on the morning of May 23, and almost at once our dear friend and doctor, Mr. E. B. Turner, appeared. In a very few moments he came out to me, told me he was much alarmed and must have further advice. I felt then he was pronouncing sentence of death. I telegraphed to her soldier-brother Gerald, and went up to St. Mary Magdalene's, Munster Square, to find Mr. Giraud, who came to Etheldred that afternoon. She herself was bright and positively merry, and Jack and our Nannie, who was looking after Jack, lavished attentions on her. In the early hours of that Sunday after Ascension Day Jack and I went to Holy Communion at 7 a.m. at St. Matthew's, after which we returned to her. Nannie had made the room ready, and Mr. Hockley, the then Vicar of St. Matthew's, brought her the Blessed Sacrament. At 9 a.m. Gerald arrived from Scotland, where he was then quartered. At 10 Mr. Turner and Dr. Acland arrived and very soon they came back to us, and Dr. Acland told us that there was no hope. She had been attacked by sarcoma. I sat feeling numb. Gerald and Jack were perfectly stunned. I

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asked one or two questions, and then a sudden recollection flashed into my mind of something I had read, and I asked if radium had not been of use in such cases. "Yes, they were meaning to speak of radium and to arrange that the head of the Radium Institute should be consulted. In the meantime Ethel was to do much as she liked." We had half imagined that the lump on her chest meant an abscess and would entail an operation, so I went into her room and said, "Darling, there is to be no operation, no nursing home, and you can do whatever you like." "Oh, can I?" said she in the lightest of tones, "then I'll get up and go to Church." Jack had an appointment he was obliged to keep. And Gerald and I took her in a taxi to St. Matthew's close by. St. Matthew's and our dearly loved St. Mary Magdalene are, as is well-known, closely linked and the type of service is alike in both. For once in my life, at least, I realised that the Eucharist is a foretaste of Heaven; I suppose such times are to prepare our souls for what lies before us. We were quite happy the rest of the day; Jack possessed an extremely good gramophone, and Ethel quite enjoyed it. No one who saw us four that Sunday evening would have guessed that one of us was in danger of death. The genial and skilful head of the Radium Institute came to see her, and it was settled that on Whit Monday the treatment should begin. We took her motor drives, and on Whitsun Eve Gerald, who had returned to Edinburgh, made his appearance driving a lovely Rover car, which he had bought for her. Our dear Bishop came to see his Fritz, as he always called her. Bishop Gore, who had prepared her for Confirmation, and the Archbishop of York, who, as Mr. Lang the Vicar of S. Mary's, Oxford, had played

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hide-and-seek in our Oxford house also came, and one or two of her own dearly loved Sisters.

A dear little house in Regent's Park, belonging to Miss Jervois and Miss Alice Jervois was to be lent to us, and we hoped against hope. The great difficulty was, she could eat so little and the cough was terrible. Often I thought she would die in the night. Yet in the day she was bright, and would creep round to St. Matthew's, and on Whit Sunday she went to the High Mass. Mr. Hockley brought her Holy Communion several times. On Whit Monday I took her up to the Radium Institute and she told me she meant to make these days into Retreat Days. She was to spend five days there from about 10 a.m. till 4 p.m., and all the while I don't think she was at all unhappy. She took books and, as she said, converted the time into Retreat. I don't remember much of my own doings. My whole self was one passionate prayer that she might be cured. I had really no sense of being willing she should go. The very idea of being without her filled me with the same terror which had possessed me twenty years before at the prospect of losing her father. On Saturday I managed to take her in the motor to her new home, but she seemed very ill. The library was to be her bedroom; it opened into a little garden and was charmingly furnished. I had contrived to pick up a very pretty bed for her, and great was the dear child's pleasure; she revived a little and was pleased to see some of our own servants who had come from Scotland, my own maid, who was devoted to her, and another, and Miss Jervois had left her housekeeper and butler. To my great relief Mr. Pinch, the head of the Radium Institute, had told me to engage a nurse, to which proceeding



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Etheldred had hitherto greatly objected, and also forbade her to go upstairs or walk much, as the pressure on the heart was so great. It was this which had caused the terrible breathlessness, which alarmed me when I saw her the day after her arrival from India, and which subsided when she was left lying still.

From the moment our sick nurse appeared until the moment our darling needed her no more she was the greatest comfort and support.

[To Sister —.]

4 Artillery Mansions,  
Victoria Street, S.W.  
May 27, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR,

It is a great relief to get your letter. I had just written to Sister — to ask her to tell you. But you mustn't give up all hope yet; we have not tried the radium so far, and it has done wonders. What I want is lots and lots of prayers, that if it be right, this may cure me. Mother is very hopeful about it. I am very thankful to have plenty of time (though I don't know how much, nor do the doctors) for getting ready for whatever may come. I am rather glad you didn't come to-day—we are still pretty busy with doctors. Couldn't you stick to next Wednesday? and we would keep the day clear for you.

What about the girls knowing? I long to have their prayers, but I am not sure yet whether Sister — means to tell the Sisters as a whole, though I have written to ask her to; so of course the girls couldn't unless.

I am very happy at present and not a bit afraid,

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though the idea used to terrify me. No doubt there will be reactions; that is why I want prayers.

This must go, my dear one. Don't make up your mind too soon, but pray for my recovery and that I may use this time well.

Your very loving—

✠ ED.

Mother is *splendid*. Much love to the Sisters and thanks to Sister — for her letter.

*Whitsun Day, 1914.*

MY VERY DEAR,

I can't tell you how touched I am by the children's share; I hope it isn't too much. There will be such a lot of prayers altogether. Whatever happens, it is very beautiful to find how much love there is in the world.

The little house is quite settled on. Did we tell you?—47 Albany Street, and we went and looked at it yesterday—a dear little house with a charming look-out across the park, and a little garden; and such nice pretty rooms: a minute's walk from S. M. M. We go there on Friday.

Gerry appeared again yesterday from Edinburgh, driving up in a beautiful car which he has somehow managed to purchase for the use of the family! So Mother will always be taking me out now!

I hope you will all be having a happy day tomorrow. It was lovely to see you, and I am so glad you are feeling more hopeful. I do think prayers do marvellous things. I shall have Holy Unction next week,<sup>1</sup> I think.

<sup>1</sup> Alas! she never had it,

# The Story of an English Sister

June 5, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR,

A little line, now that it is all over for a time, to thank you and all the dear children for all you have done for me. I don't suppose we shall ever know how much it is. It is nice to have it over. The hours were rather long and one gets restless with being in one room. But dear Dr. Pinch and his nurses are delightful. I think I told you what it was—little leaden caskets strapped on to me with sticking plaster and bandages—it felt rather heavy. Do relieve Sister —'s mind as to my food. It was ordered in from a restaurant close by and I eat it in the ordinary way! To-morrow we go to 47 Albany Street—we had hoped for to-day but it wasn't ready in time. Dr. Pinch forbids all going upstairs, so I am to have what is really the library for my bed-sitting-room. It opens into the garden and is a charming room. They say I shall feel rather worn out and drowsy for about a week, as the radium takes it out of one and I had some tremendously strong doses.

How *sweet* of the Cottage<sup>1</sup>—little darlings. I haven't coughed so much and my nights have been better since the prayers began. Do tell the children that; it can't be the radium yet, so it must be the prayers.

Much love, my dearest, to you and all.

Etheldred appeared to mend. Little by little the lump in the chest grew smaller and smaller, the temperature became almost normal, and the terribly rapid pulse grew slower. My foolish heart, always ready to leap up, grew almost light, and our dear

<sup>1</sup> Where the smaller children lived.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

Bishop came to me full of rejoicing—so did Bishop Gore. Ethel was so glad to be within three minutes' walk of St. Mary Magdalene, and never missed one Sunday morning service during the eight weeks we spent in the dear little house. Mr. Giraud brought her the Blessed Sacrament two or three times a week, and she used to go over to the church almost every day. Then we had delicious motor drives, generally into northern suburbs and she began to sleep peacefully at night. One great pleasure was that a girl friend she much loved and who had painted a picture of her, was on the point of joining Ethel's own Community, and the talks they had together were enjoyed by both.

*47 Albany Street,  
Regent's Park, N.W.  
June 19, 1914.*

MY DEAREST ALEX,

It was so nice to get your letter this morning. I feel I have treated you badly in the way of writing, but I knew Mother was keeping you up in the news, and my days now are so short that there really isn't much time for letter-writing. I am dreadfully lazy—I am not up till 12—then I go across to S.M.M. till lunch; then we go for a drive in the car (awbaw). Then perhaps some one comes in to tea; and from 6 to 7 I have to myself either at S.M.M. or just in my room; and I go to bed quite early. Isn't it wonderful, Alex, do you know, the lump is really quite gone now! Miss Ward<sup>1</sup> came to-day and I showed her my chest, and she said she really wouldn't know anything was wrong—you can *just* see there is a little swelling—nothing like what you saw when you first

<sup>1</sup> Miss Gertrude Ward.

## The Story of an English Sister

saw it even. All this has happened since Sunday—it was there all right then! I told the Indian Sisters it couldn't stand up against their prayers—it was just as they heard about me that the lump began to fade away. I am quite longing to see dear Mr. Pinch, the radium man, but he doesn't expect us for another three or four weeks. I am wondering whether there will be anything left for him to do by that time! Nurse, who is a dear quiet thing, is simply amazed, for she hasn't had experience of radium, but she has of sarcoma; once she nursed a case exactly like mine, and it did not end in the lump disappearing. She tells me now that she did think very badly of me when she came to us on June 6th, the day after the radium. By that time the lump was really very big—it grew after we got to London; and I was so breathless and my pulse very rapid; also eating was a great difficulty. Thank-you very much, dear Alex, for your share in this—for I do not put it down entirely to the radium; and please tell Mr. Black how grateful I am for his prayers too. It does really look as if I was meant to stay here<sup>1</sup> after all; a fortnight ago I really didn't think so. But I do feel quite a different person within just a week.

I wish you could see your way to coming south and bringing George if necessary. It is so breezy and healthy here just in the park as we are—and it's all so *gay* and jolly—London is delicious. The children in London certainly all look the picture of health; and it's so easy with the car to roll up to Hampstead Heath for a regular blow. We've been for some delicious drives right away into the country. And our little garden between times is charming to sit in.

<sup>1</sup> On earth.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

We have tea there every day. It's such a nice airy house.

Don't stop praying for me, dear A. I am not out of the wood yet; and ask that if my life is given to me, it may be a more truly converted one in the future.

Your v. loving—

FRITZ.

[To Mrs. James Peck.]

June 28, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR,

It is lovely, isn't it? Mother and I are so happy. It is all still so new and wonderful—the coming back, as it were, I mean. I hadn't let myself hope at all—one can keep oneself from doing that—partly because I did want to want whichever it was to be, and partly because dashed hopes are so much the more sad. So it makes this all the more lovely and glorious—and the sun and the flowers are so beautiful. I did think that even if I had to go, my life had just been crammed with happiness—as much as lots of people have in twice as long a life, so that anyhow I could do nothing but give thanks : but all the same it is glorious to be going to have some more. Do you know Mrs. Woods's poems? If you don't, Win, get them. She has just brought them all out in one volume, *Collected Poems*. This is one (I quote from memory)—

I've heard, I've heard,  
The long low note of a bird,  
The nightingale fluting her heart's one word.

I know, I know,  
Pink carnations heaped with snow,  
In summer and winter alike they blow.

# The Story of an English Sister

I've lain, I've lain  
Under roses' delicate rain,  
That fall and whisper and fall again.

Come woe, come white  
Shroud o' the world, black night,  
I have had love and the sun's light.

That is what ran in my head all through those first days. One has had so much that it could not be surprising if it had been counted that this life's cup were full. And yet it is such a joy to find it isn't! This is rather puzzling because what do we mean when we sing "Jerusalem, my happy home, When shall I come to thee, etc."? I always feel quite sincere about it. Perhaps we are looking forward then more to Heaven than to the intermediate state. I must say I always do think when one remembers or sees Egyptian mummies, it does strike one that there is plenty of time to be dead in without being in a hurry for it!

I shouldn't wonder a bit if we did get out to you, and when you see me you will think what a dreadful fraud. Tell us how long you are to be there.<sup>1</sup>

[To Mrs. James Peck.]

July 28, 1914.

MY DEAREST OF WINS,

The flowers are lovely, so fresh and beautiful. The ramblers are a great mass of colour in the middle of the room. Thank you *very* much, and the neighbour too. I have come to rejoice in flowers more than ever before, I was going to say since I've been ill, but I think it would be more true to say, since I was a Sister. Other Sisters have noticed this about themselves; perhaps it is because we were too dis-

<sup>1</sup> Mrs. Peck had taken a house in the country near London.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

tracted before by things we don't have now. It's the same with music, when we get it, or anything beautiful.

No, I mentioned Aug. 9th because I thought you said you were leaving on August 10th, so I was putting our possible drive *from Stow* to you as late as possible. I didn't reckon up what day of the week it would be! We go to Stow on Thursday next by a prosaic train.

No, I don't know Francis Thompson's Essays, only some of his poetry; and I read his *Life* with great interest. Mother knows the Meynells, and Norman is quite a friend of Mrs. Meynell's, whom he admires immensely. Do you know her poems and essays? I feel convinced that you do not know Mrs. Woods's poems; I wish you would get them. She is like Francis Thompson in not having been recognised except by the very *élite*. *The Times Literary Supplement*, however, devoted their front page article to her the other day and headed it "A Woman's Genius," so perhaps she will come to her own. She is great, not just a good minor poet. She is the wife of the Master of the Temple, who used to be President of Trinity.<sup>1</sup>

Your very loving—

FRTZ.

She had another course at the Radium Institute in July and we were advised to go into the country for six weeks or so. I was fortunate enough to find a charming rectory—Stow-in-the-Wold—to let, on the edge of the Cotswolds. Etheldred had set her heart on seeing that part of England, and her delight was great when she had a telegram from me saying

<sup>1</sup> Dr. Woods died in June 1915.



## The Story of an English Sister

it was "All right." She had seen the advertisement of it herself in *The Times*. When we arrived on the 31st of July she seemed so fresh and well, and walked in the garden, admiring the delicious open view. We had left London in the throes of anxiety about the war prospects, but here in Gloucestershire all was calm. Giles was with us, his elder brother, Norman, was on a reading party. I remember how I gave up a little sitting-room to Giles, who was reading for the Modern History School, and he unpacked his books and prepared to read very hard. The first two days, Saturday, the 1st of August, and Sunday the 2nd, Etheldred was miserably ill: a lump seemed to come into her throat; once I began to fear the worst, but on Monday she seemed much better. On Wednesday we knew war was declared. On that day or the next Giles went to London to join his brothers, who all imagined they would immediately obtain commissions and be sent to fight. As a matter of fact, Norman, the least war-like, contrived to enlist, and thus was the first in the field, but in a short time he was made to take a commission by his Colonel.

Etheldred was greatly impressed, and collected immense quantities of newspapers, and her pride in her four brothers, who all rushed to offer themselves, was great. She much enjoyed a visit from our beloved Gwennie Palgrave, and seemed so well I became absolutely cheerful. I remember saying to my maid, "I do believe Sister is going to recover." Meantime news of the horrors the Germans were bringing upon the Belgians reached us. As we drove about the sweet Gloucestershire country it seemed impossible that so near to us fiends in human shape were wreaking unspeakable cruelties on helpless old people and

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

women and children and nuns and priests. The intense beauty of England never seemed so impressive as it did then. How lovely these Gloucestershire villages and churches are. Etheldred and I revelled in North-leach and Burford and the sweet little Bourton-on-the-Water and Quenington.

In a few days Gwennie was joined by her sister and they took rooms in a charming village a few miles away and made many excursions with us.

But after the first three weeks Etheldred began to flag; her throat once more troubled her. I could see that our excellent nurse was uneasy, and we agreed to get a flat in London and try radium again. On August 23 (Sunday) she was unable to go to church, and I, inspired by some thought, suggested to her to let me ask the Priest who was taking the duty to bring her Holy Communion after the usual Saint's Day Service on August 24, St. Bartholomew's Day. It was a lovely summer morning and I did not think it was Etheldred's Viaticum. I went up to town in the middle of the day and met her two still un-commissioned brothers, who, thinking there was no cause for alarm, were just starting for a week in Scotland. After a weary search I found a flat and returned to her.

[To Miss Charnock.]

*The Rectory,  
Stow-on-the-Wold, Glos.  
August 19, 1914.*

DEAREST PHYLLIS,

It was very nice to hear from you. I am so glad you are having this lovely weather for the lakes. What things have happened since we met! All our boys are involved, as the three youngest have

## The Story of an English Sister

volunteered. Gerry isn't likely to go to the Front for, at any rate, three months; by that time his Territorials will be ready to go. Jack is the most likely to go; he has a commission in King Edward's Horse. Norman has enlisted, feeling his incompetence as a soldier and this involves training. Giles is still besieging the War Office for a commission. They are all three in London, Jack very busy meanwhile organising Scouts. Here it is difficult to realise what is going on—it is such beautiful peaceful country. We drive every day and see such lovely churches and villages: Cirencester, Burford, Northleach, all magnificent, besides lots of little ones. I am much better, after having a very bad bout the first few days I was here, when I felt more ill than I have ever done. It is a strange illness, or rather the remedy is strange—and involves the most extraordinary ups and downs. One day I felt so well that I walked a mile and a half, after not having crawled more than a few yards since India, last January! To-day I don't feel I could do that. Then, again, twice over a huge lump has appeared in my throat and then subsided. Must end.

Your loving—

FRITZ.

[To Mrs. James Peck.]

*August 22, 1914.*

DEAREST OF WINS,

It is horrid of me not to have written a line after your last letter, but it was partly because I was resolved you should have a letter and not a mere p.c. I did get extraordinarily much better for about ten days, just as I did after the *first* radium dose, I mean as regards feelings. Did I tell you I suddenly

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

went for a walk of a mile and a half after not having been able for six months to crawl more than a few yards? Everybody was horrified, and Mother, in her dismay, made quite a good spoonerism: "Do remember how impulsive it is to take care of your port." However, my "port" was all right and so was everything else except my muscles; the last walk of that kind was in India. I am not quite so comfy again now. It is a funny illness or else the remedy is. I've had a big lump at the bottom of my throat for about a week—it looks as if I had swallowed an egg whole and it hadn't gone down. It is not where the lumps were before. It keeps me from eating easily and my respiration is quick again, probably owing to the same thing. It would be really rather alarming if it hadn't happened before in London; the doctors didn't like it then, but it went completely away, showing that it couldn't be what they feared. So no doubt it will again. It must be some queer effect of the convulsive working of the radium. I stay in bed till twelve, or sometimes till lunch; after lunch I lie down again for an hour.

At three we go for a drive, sometimes long, sometimes short. I go to bed at 9.30 or so, but often have dinner in a big armchair in my room, ready for bed. This programme varies according to how I am. *E. g.* a week ago we drove all the way across the Cotswolds to one of our Community Houses where the Sisters gave us lunch, stopping at Cirencester on the way and seeing the Church; and driving back by Cheltenham, having tea at a little place called Bisley in a most beautiful Elizabethan house where Queen Elizabeth had been, and we saw all over it. How you would have rejoiced in it, Win. In the garden was a funny tomb-shaped thing, and we were

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told the Bisley legend, which is that when Queen Elizabeth was a child she stayed there and took ill and died; and they were all so frightened of Henry VIII that they buried her in the garden without saying anything, and dressed up a red-headed Bisley boy, who became our Queen Elizabeth, and that's why she was so masculine. The Bisley people firmly believe it. Well, all this to show how much I could do *last* Saturday—we were out from 11 till dinner time. And the next morning I went at 8 a.m. to Church (before breakfast). The first time since January 21st in India. I couldn't do either of those things now. Isn't it queer? But the thing to go by is the X-rays. You see last time after the radium I got better and then felt ill again; and yet the X-ray results were astounding. We shall go to Town for this in a fortnight or three weeks. The Cotswolds are simply heavenly; such views, such villages, such churches. We are within driving distance of Burford and Fairford and have been to both.

What a fearful long thing about myself, but I know you want to know, and it's rather difficult to convey a true impression by just saying I'm better or worse.

This is an *awful* time. I am so glad, dear Win, that your man's duty lies at home. Jack and Giles are chafing at not getting commissions the minute they apply and being sent off to Belgium, which is what they really expected, dear things. Norman, who is a man of thought rather than of action, and is extremely unwarlike and very unathletic, not to say awkward, has refused to apply for a commission on the ground of his incompetence as a soldier, and is now a private in the Worcestershire Regiment.

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

Every minute of the training at home will be purgatory to him, and if he goes to the Front, it will be another and worse place.<sup>1</sup> Perhaps I've told you all this before—forgive me if I have, but I am so pleased with him specially.

By the way, Compton Mackenzie's books don't lie about in our cloisters; but I happened to be interested in him personally, apart from his books.

Much dear love from—

FRITZ.

[To Miss Palgrave.]

*August 24, 1914.*

DEAREST GWENNY,

Mother is gone to Town to-day to find a dwelling place and will be back to-morrow afternoon, when the car will be wanted to meet her. I thought I would come on the chance of finding you, to-morrow morning about 11; but don't wait in if you have other and better plans—I should have a drive anyhow. I have been looking at the little guide and marking down all the unvisited, attractive, and not too-far-away places, and there seem to be quite a herd of them round Northleach and Cirencester. If I am not there by 11.30 it is because Nurse has put her foot down, and says I must not come; the lump is still bothering, but I am very well otherwise. I should come and see you this afternoon, only a Sister and two of my former pupils are being driven over from Radley to see me.

Your loving—

FRITZ.

Love to Margaret.

<sup>1</sup> But Norman was not at all unhappy as a private, and has made many friends since he joined the Army.

# The Story of an English Sister

[The day before she left us.]

August 26, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR SISTER,

It is really very dreadful that I should never have written to you, and you have written such dear letters to me which I have loved. It isn't because I haven't often thought about you, and loved you all the time. Thank-you for your dear sympathy. This has been, and still is, a strange time of suspense, and for me an initiation into sickness and its lessons. I only hope I shall learn them properly. It has been a very merciful sort of illness, as there has only been discomfort, not pain; and I myself, if you can understand, have been feeling quite strong "in myself," as people say. There has just been the breathlessness and sense of suffocation which has caused other discomforts, but I could still feel that if the thing could just be removed, I should soon get on all right again. But it couldn't have gone on very long if it had not been for the radium, and the *wonderful* number of prayers. Did you hear about the School children? They spent so much of their time interceding for me last term that I felt quite ashamed: on the radium days—three together and then five together, six hours a day—they had continuous intercession; and the Cottage, headed by K— (a tiny friend of mine) demanded to join in too—though most of those little ones had never even seen me. Every evening they sang "Now the day is over," with special intention at the fifth verse, and every Thursday they had a time in Chapel, while the big ones had several times a week set apart in Chapel, besides a weekly Mass. No wonder

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

I got better. "Such business-like bricks," some one remarked, going in from the back of the Chapel!

But I am still having funny ups and downs, and frightening my poor Mother out of her wits. I think it is the convulsive working of the radium.

Don't we live in stirring times? Does the war affect you at all? I mean, would you know there *was* a war? It is very difficult here to realise it in this charming house which we took for six weeks—it is such beautiful peaceful country. All my four brothers are involved, as one is a soldier, two have applied for commissions, and the poet, feeling his incompetence as a soldier, has refused to apply and enlisted. None are at the Front yet. We have just had splendid news of how well our men fought on the first day of this awful battle, and are being filled with horror at the apparently true stories of German cruelty.

Sister — has just arrived, and is to stay three nights—isn't that lovely? She sadly needs a rest, but has not been able to leave Mother. This is a very stupid letter and it is too much about myself, but I *am* rather stupid to-night and am writing in bed.

Good-bye for the present, my dearest, and do give my love to those I know.

Your loving—

✠ ETHELDRED.

*August 26, 1914.*

MY DEAREST SISTER,

What perfectly splendid news this is <sup>1</sup>—thank you so much for telegraphing. I should think

<sup>1</sup> The results of an Examination at the School.



## The Story of an English Sister

it is the best we have ever had, isn't it? Do give my congratulations to *all* the girls separately. It's *simply lovely*. I should love to have details. The Higher Local is *excellent*. It was so nice to see you and E—— and D——, only the time didn't seem long enough. I am afraid I mustn't think of coming to you; this lump is very tiresome in making me unfit—it affects my breathing, and that always makes me no good and unable to do much. Unless of course it goes away before then. I felt quite well on the Bussage day. I am sure the lump is only temporary, but it is exacting while it lasts. Nurse and I went to Cheltenham (15 miles) to-day to meet Sister — as a surprise, to prevent her waiting two hours there (the imp made us miss her by one minute, it was too tantalising and she came on to Stow by train as arranged after all—we thought she hadn't come and of course she wasn't met at Stow either!); and I must own I should not have cared for the drive to be any longer. I am in bed now (6 p.m.), rather tired, tho' if anything the lump is better, not worse.

Very much love to you all.

On Tuesday the 25th she was very well, and went for a long motor drive with Gwenny and Margaret Palgrave, and the day before a dearly loved Sister came in the afternoon for a few hours.

Wednesday evening was a peculiarly bright one, and my very last recollections of our darling so long as she could speak are happy laughter. I lingered in her room that last night, and said, "I hate leaving you," and she laughed back, saying "We'll, it won't be long before we meet." Early in the morning her bell rang sharply, down rushed her faithful nurse, I followed. (Nurse had been to her at least once and

## India—Return Home—The Final Trial

found her quite peaceful; she could not bear to have any one in the room at night.) I hastily called the household, and then went back. I read the prayers for the dying from the *Treasury of Devotion*, a book she often used,<sup>1</sup> and I said over and over again the *De Profundis* and the 23rd Psalm. It was not long before her sweet soul fled “before the morning watch.”

We laid her dear body in the peaceful God's Acre of her Community, and her brothers were able to be with me; the youngest of that little band of soldiers which followed her fell ten months later, and his body lies beneath the Mediterranean waves.

I finish this just after the third anniversary of her passing: a poet whom she greatly loved has said for me what I would have tried to say—

Three years! And is it then so long?  
I thought it happened yesterday.  
How is it with thee far away  
In the white world of palm and song?

[From the Rev. H. Scott Holland, D.D.]<sup>2</sup>

Christ Church, Oxford.  
August 28, 1914.

MY VERY DEAR FRIEND,

She has passed from war and tumult into rest and peace. She has been spared the evil days. She carried home her beautiful calm soul, her ordered spirit, her high and noble steadfastness, her perfect purity of will, as it shone through the glorious outlook in her steady eyes.

<sup>1</sup> Besides *The Treasury of Devotion*, the books which Ethel always had by her side were *Revelations of Divine Love*, *The Imitation of Christ*, *Vita et Doctrina Jesu Christi*, and her Greek Testament.

<sup>2</sup> While correcting the proof of this the sad news came that our dear friend had passed to his rest.

## The Story of an English Sister

You will give her back to God, as an unblemished offering, made one with the sinlessness of Christ her Lord.

It is such a gift as few mothers can have had the privilege of offering. You will exult, in the midst of your tears, before all this consummated joy. She is ready to be offered. She is robed all in white. She will, pray God, follow the Lamb whithersoever He goeth. You remain, crowned with the tender honour of her memory—with your heart gone on with her. Christ keeps our treasures safe. God comfort and sustain you. Indeed, my prayers will be with you to-morrow.

Yours ever,  
H. S. HOLLAND.

## EPILOGUE

### I.—BY HER BROTHER, NORMAN HUGH ROMANES

IN attempting to reproduce something of the vivid impression which my sister always made anew on every occasion that we met, as it was so constantly our fate to do, after several months' separation, I am confronted at the outset by this very difficulty of her extraordinary adaptability to whatever fresh circumstances the intervening period might have discovered. And this was no mere attempt on her part, as it would perhaps have been with a companion of less fine intelligence, to "join in" with one's immediate interests or activities; it invariably resulted after the first few minutes' glad, not to say boisterous, conversation in a real union to which her own overflowing personality contributed much that had been lacking before. I can only hope that those who have already studied the letters contained in the present volume, and have seen from them how varied, and yet how intense her nature was, will be able to follow what I mean in this most essential aspect of my recollection.

To begin at the beginning, I best remember during the years before my brother Giles and I went to Summerfields, and indeed for many years subsequently, her wonderful gifts as a story-teller.

It is from Cornwall Terrace that this earliest scene comes back, where in the splendid nursery at the top of the house, she would often during the holidays fascinate us both, sometimes throughout the whole

## Epilogue

of a wet afternoon, with an astonishing talent for inventing plots and characters, which I often wish she had employed on behalf of a wider—though certainly not of a more appreciative—audience.

It is true that her stories were always concerned with naughty children, whether boys at school or a large family supposed to live in the country, and that the actual incidents were frequently, though by no means always, borrowed from books she had been reading; none the less were her characters always alive and never the same, while even the incidents themselves, though suggested by some of the more sensational chapters in *Eric*, *St. Winifred's*, *The Fairchild Family*, and so on, shone forth in a new dress, that to me made them infinitely more convincing than they afterwards appeared when I came across the originals.

At Balmyle, a house we took in Perthshire, and Pitcalzean, these Arabian Nights' Entertainments of ours were unfailing sources of delight, and it was only when Fritz actually departed to her Community that they ceased, after which date her short "Rests" afforded but few opportunities for their resumption.

There was one family whose history occupied an entire cycle belonging to the later Pitcalzean epoch. The eldest boy was called Philip and the heroine Margaret, both favourite names of their creator's. The others, I am afraid, have passed into oblivion, but they were all of them perpetually in most serious rows, and the birch-rod or "tawse" (theirs was an ancient Scotch family wherein both instruments flourished freely) were seldom allowed to remain idle in the cupboard for long.

I was soon to find out that Fritz's interest in the troubles of schoolroom children and their punishments

## Epilogue

was not confined to fiction, but represented a part of that deep knowledge of the mysteries of youthful psychology, which no doubt contributed much to her immense success as a teacher. My own particular experience of this insight belongs to a slightly later period; though I may as well remark here in passing that no tutor I have ever known as such could approach her power of making all subjects she taught—and at different times, so far as concerns my own early lessons, they were many—vital and absorbing.

Towards the end of my first year at Eton it happened that what might have proved a crisis of the first magnitude arose, although I still think a vast fuss was made by the authorities out of exceedingly little.

Fritz, at my mother's request, rushed down from London, and during a single half-holiday afternoon exercised an incredible amount of tact, which I believe was largely instrumental in bringing off the affair as happily as it turned out. But it is not so much this side of that day which I recall, for most of the particulars I did not hear until later; it was her actual sympathy with me which made the lasting impression. She was among the few who understood how real and terrific the difficulties of small people appear to them.

I have now to record certain isolated matters which probably belong to various Easter holidays of Summerfields date, spent chiefly in London.

In looking back on these I am conscious that they are but the remains of much else of the same sort which has been forgotten.

The first awakening of an interest in music and literature is what I connect with them, since though

## Epilogue

other causes for this were undoubtedly present, it was so impossible to be much thrown together with one who, though so much older and more experienced, was at the same time ever ready to share in our most childish amusements, without becoming aware of how greatly these mysterious things delighted her.

The first real concert, for example, one of the admirable Sunday afternoon performances at the Queen's Hall, was made even more marvellous by its having been Fritz who arranged our going together, and by her wonderful interpretations of what was beyond a very crude schoolboy's comprehension.

Another remarkable Eastertide that I think of—1904—when a large number of Shakespeare's plays were being acted, is brought vividly back as my earliest experience of the theatre : here Fritz was an invariably sure companion. She had always been a lover and student of Shakespeare, and to be with her at one's first enthusiastic acceptance of his genius was exhilarating in the highest degree. *Everyman* I also recollect at this same time, and several lesser masterpieces. It always seems to me that of all mere worldly sacrifices which her Vocation to the Religious Life involved, that of going to the play must have been what Fritz found hardest. Her pleasure was so keen, and her judgment of every side of dramatic art excellent.

How true also was her feeling for certain of the best passages in English poetry, though perhaps her knowledge in this field was more confined to definite well-marked paths than in others where her interest was equally stirred.

Milton's earlier poems she used to read aloud with finest effect, and my first introduction to Christina Rossetti came appropriately from one who was not

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only a loving admirer of that exquisite singer, but who was also so deeply imbued with the same devout spirit.

By far the most momentous secret, however, of which it was hers to bring the key, was the august and noble vigour of George Herbert. An edition of *The Temple* is inscribed by her with these lines for the Christmas of 1905—

The shepherds sing; and shall I silent be?  
My God, no hymn for Thee?  
My soul's a shepherd too. . . .

(*From the poem on CHRISTMAS.*)

Her own hymns reveal a sense of quality and craftsmanship which raises them to a far higher level than that of mere versification, and they deserve wider recognition.

Her withdrawal from the world in 1908 was a loss that could not be repaired.

Some of her letters written to me at that period, which have been given elsewhere in these pages, will show how unfailing was her care for what she knew of one's thoughts and pastimes amid all the new and laborious duties and which must have thronged every day at St. —. I must not attempt any account of those last sad months after her return from India. It was on the telephone that Giles informed me of the true reason for that hurried and hitherto mysterious journey home.

He had come back from the Community House on the day of her arrival there to Magdalen, and though his message was full of reassurance, I felt then a premonitory thrill of dread for what was to happen.

These vague reminiscences draw to a close, but it must not be without some remark on that which



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after all is the most treasured memory of all intercourse with her : that is her tremendous sense of fun.

Even her profoundest religious life seemed to be permeated with this, for she constantly asserted that one mark of genuine religion was the presence within it of mirth and laughter.

Hundreds of instances crowd upon such a retrospect as this : games played round the fire in the Pit drawing-room, the plays which we used to get up at Christmas-time, of which she was in many respects the soul, and always the most perfect performer ; and in a boundless store of friendly chaff which carried everything before it.

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### II.—BY MRS. JAMES PECK

(WINIFRED KNOX)

IN the January of 1898 three or four excited little girls were travelling from Oxford to Wycombe for their first Spring Term. In one corner, with her back to the engine, sat an Enigma. She was an Enigma because she had her hair up, and such grown-up clothes, and so much apparent dignity that it was impossible to imagine her one of those despised beings, a new girl. Yet, even to the merciless eyes of those to whom twenty and fifty are indistinguishable points of old age, she did not look like a mistress or any really alien being. Then something funny happened, nothing quite as funny as a hat blowing out of the window, but something really good of that kind, and from the window came first an unmistakable chuckle, and then a peculiarly jolly and irrepressible laugh. It became clear that this was a new girl of a quite

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distinct type and class, and her name, we discovered, was Ethel Romanes.

That first impression of one who was grown-up, or, as we termed it after Mr. Kenneth Graham's books appeared, Olympian, and yet an entirely simple and amused school-girl was one which lasted Ethel all through her school life. It was a cause of amazement to every one in her first term. Here was a person who was put straight into the top-form and yet enjoyed being, as a new girl, bottom in house-order; one who played the violin remarkably and yet enjoyed nigger songs; one who did such a grown-up thing as being presented in the middle of Term, in a white dress with a snowdrop bouquet, and yet infinitely preferred hockey; one who had read all sorts of books we classified, collectively, as stodge, and yet laughed so helplessly over school jokes that it was dangerous to call her attention to them at unsuitable moments; one who had known at home all sorts of famous men and women, and yet had as much power of entertaining school-girl friendships and adorations as if Wycombe were the only world. We were not analytical enough to see deeper into this apparent contradiction; it is only now that it appears clearly to represent something at the heart of Ethel's character, as it must be probably at the heart of every soul chosen by God for Himself. It was, then, something which made Ethel unusual and interesting, and, while part of Wycombe, in a way never wholly of it.

For it is probably a fact that she influenced the school as much as it influenced her. During that second term of its existence, Wycombe Abbey was not only in the draughty throes of the efforts of an architect to transform an ordinary country house into a girls' school: it was also in that critical stage of early

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moral development, where character and ideals were even more necessary than bricks and mortar. The older girls were necessarily young, the younger very young indeed. There was a vague inheritance from St. Leonard's School of a public-school tradition, but probably neither mistresses nor girls quite saw how this was to become convincing. The ideal, however, was so obviously a noble one that it inevitably appealed to Ethel. That sense of individual honour and corporate responsibility, of membership to each other in the school, and through the school to the world outside, was undoubtedly one of the inspiring forces in the women's movement of the last few years. To Ethel, coming from a family of brothers, and a school of an old-fashioned type, the ideal appealed so successfully that she herself inspired it with real life. "So-and-so's such a silly; of course no one could do such a thing here," she would say with distaste of any one who suggested that form of sport which consists in taking advantage of a position of trust. "Why should we? I don't see anything funny in *that*," was another maxim in these circumstances. But at the same time that form of petty tyranny which turns a girl's sense of honour into an unpaid pupil-teacher, was not countenanced by her. "I wish they wouldn't be so funny. It's no business of ours if so-and-so does do her hair that way or doesn't like games. Boys aren't like that; they leave people alone." She saw the strong side of the system, and the weak side as it is carried out by women. To her, the House, at any rate, owed a sanity and trustworthiness which gave force to a new and rather incommunicable ideal.

That was her relation to Wycombe, but it is easy now to see how in other ways those two character-

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istics, the early development on one side and the childishness of the pure in heart on the other, were the expression of her character and vocation alike.

One manifestation of them, soon realised by her friends, was a curious detachment from the storms that rage round the characters of school-life. She could look at people always from the outside, and was often indeed in the position of laughing at authority itself up a charitable sleeve. She never flung herself into the vortex of "so she said" and "so I said." With a jolly laugh after trouble in form or house she used to say, "Of course it was all so awfully funny, because I knew Miss — couldn't really mind very much about it all, but naturally she had to pretend to." I remember how she pointed out that one mistress's trick of pausing impressively and twisting her watch-chain was not due, as we imagined, to sheer cruelty, and a love of torture by suspense, but simply to sheer nervousness. It seemed so daring to realise that a mistress could be shy of you! On one or two occasions when the Sixth Form (composed of girls of sixteen to eighteen years of age) was accused by critical mistresses for a want of dignity, especially after a nigger entertainment, where Ethel had been a conspicuous success, she heard remonstrances with real contrition, but looked up afterwards with a helpless chuckle. "They're so dear and funny," she would say to an intimate. "Mother *will* laugh when I tell her about that." One very clear little memory illustrates this point. She and a friend were in the habit of starting very early for Evening Church on Sunday, to take possession of a specially choice seat by a side door, whence you could get a very early start on the way home. But we had rivals, in the shape of a Wycombe dowager and her daughter, who, with no

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school restrictions to hamper them, usually arrived first. There came, however, a day when we achieved the impossible, and had the rapture of seeing our thwarted rivals glare at us impotently, and pass with a hiss of, "It's taken!" The laughter caused by such situations is only in proportion to the impossibility of indulging in it. We rocked in silent giggles far into the First Lesson with relapses during the Sermon. Only on the way home remorse suddenly clutched at our hearts. We had been naughty; we had giggled; we must tell our house-mistress. So the whole episode was related to a puzzled house-mistress, whose inability to grasp the situation or achieve a suitable rebuke were entirely hidden from the younger of the criminals. But outside the door Ethel gave herself a little wriggle. "Poor dear!" she said. "We were sillies to be so stupid and have to bother her about it. All the same, it's very jolly to feel it's all right now, and it *was* really very funny, wasn't it, old thing?" That voluntary submission to discipline, that sensitive honour and conscience, that power of detaching herself from her own outlook, were very typical of her in after life.

So also were those giggles. I must not say she had a sense of humour, because it was one of her favourite dicta that people who thanked Heaven for this gift were invariably devoid of it; but there never was any one who enjoyed jokes as much or had a jollier laugh for them. She always said herself that every one had a sense of humour, only it responded to different notes: to some people it was exquisitely funny to sit on a hat; others needed the stimulus of a Greek epigram. "But every one can laugh about something, you know, and the lucky people are those who can laugh at most things." In this case she was

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superlatively happy. I do not imagine that she ever in her life heard a nasty story. They do not flourish at schools like Wycombe, and no one who looked at Ethel's curiously noble face, with her alert confiding eyes, could have produced one. But every form of school-girl witticism, or nursery riddle, or Olympian humour, were fully, often riotously, appreciated. She had, too, that faculty for laughing for sheer happiness which is rare enough. I remember as we came home from early service, down the beautiful avenue, now lost to Wycombe Abbey, how she began laughing for no reason at all, "just because everything's so jolly and all right, old thing." I remember this laughter on one occasion as we met a sudden view of Buckinghamshire beechwoods in autumn; and again, one golden afternoon, as we bicycled down the Pass of Killiecrankie; and yet again as we lay in a punt on the river at Oxford listening to the bells. And so I remember her laughing for sheer happiness, on the day she was professed, in the beautiful garden of her Community. She shared with the greater of God's Saints His gift of laughter, a higher gift possibly than that demanded so passionately by the mediæval Saints, the gift of tears.

This gift must no doubt be part of the equipment of the Saints, but with Ethel it was seldom combined with those long heavy fits of depression which brought Christianity a reputation for melancholy in the heathen world. Sin could bring her, indeed, a misery hardly comprehensible to the ordinary mind. On one occasion she noticed a peculiarly terrible case in the paper, which resulted in the hanging of a woman for the murder of her child. Fritz cried and prayed for her desperately. How far those prayers reached that soul she may know now; at the time she had

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an intense conviction that God needed her help. She got special leave to go to Early Service that morning to pray for the woman's soul; she carried her misery in her heart for days. Any cruelty to animals made her almost physically sick. The sufferings of misunderstood people was one which appealed strongly to her. Any unconfessed or unforgiven sin was real misery to her. But to her prayer was such an immediate remedy, and her lack of egoism so genuine, that she was seldom unhappy for long. It is only egoists who have the power of lasting self-torture. Fritz's motto for a sin or failing, then and later, was: "Say you're sorry and don't do it again, and then remember not to!"

So, therefore, her laughter never obscured the real meaning of her life. To those she loved at Wycombe, Fritz so entirely represented a religious side of life that it would have seemed almost absurd to talk of her influence. Probably she stood alone as one who had never missed, or never rebelled at, any opportunity for Church attendance. She loved Wycombe Church, and she loved others to love it too. She alone went regularly to Early Celebrations every Sunday; she could not be persuaded to feel rebellious about the sacrifice of half-holiday evenings to church in Lent. It was an understood thing that she was consulted by people in difficulty. An odd memory remains of the horror of an old-fashioned little girl of fifteen when she discovered suddenly that Fritz understood and believed in the Darwinian theory of Evolution. How Fritz first laughed and then consoled by suggestions of the reconciliation between science and faith, far beyond the powers of most girls of seventeen to convey, are very precious remembrances. She had indeed a horror of what we called

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"pi-talks," and I remember her protesting against the spiritual revelations of a complacently dramatic and tedious person very vigorously. "Are you quite sure, —, that your soul is worth talking about for two hours on end?" But in any real difficulty she could offer perfectly natural and anxious help. Probably what was most impressive and least realised on her part was her assumption that faith must be of the first importance to every one: she created in others the good she imagined in them.

Years afterwards she and a friend planned a story of Wycombe school-life, discarded eventually because, as we agreed, "nothing ever really does happen at school." In memory one day loses itself in another, and Ethel was not one of those people so wholly wrapped up in games or work or music that they bear in memory a special little badge of their own, like the miniature college or abbey behind mediæval Bishops. She had so many interests, and she enjoyed everything so much. Every one could recall her, in her games dress, shivering in gloomy glee before a house or school hockey match, or bowling swift (often wide) balls in the cricket-field on hot summer afternoons. Wycombe clothes allowed at that date a certain relaxation from home standards, and the dark blue gymnasium dress with its wide belt was a great favourite with her. So, too, were the hooded school-cloaks. I can see her in hers making her way to Church on a stormy Saint's Day or to Evening Service in Lent. I can see her in a state of impenetrable gloom facing an examination paper; in fancy dress at a dance, or acting in one of those house-plays which meant so much at Wycombe; absorbed in an article for the *School Gazette*; pacing along on one of those huge walks made possible sometimes by whole holidays;



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sitting by the fire eating sweets and telling ghost-stories in which she firmly believed; in a white dress facing the awful prospect of playing the violin at Speech Day. All her unusual powers of enjoyment were put into her Wycombe life, and it is probably because every moment was so vivid that it is difficult to pick out any particular one. In the same way it is not easy to see how far Wycombe had a real influence on her character. In a way it was rather, perhaps, a resting-place for her than a starting-point in life. She had developed early, she had lived with older people, she had known great sorrow in her life. The companionship of other girls was a rest rather than a stimulus. Her faith, too, was very real, but there was not much at Wycombe to develop it. Probably the really excellent Church teaching and an atmosphere devoid of religious emotionalism, helped to confirm her in a breadth and firmness of view, but the real influence in her religious life came later. Probably altogether her time then was one of relaxation and enjoyment of youth and irresponsibility, while quite unconsciously she was fitting herself for the work for which she was chosen at —. For after all, God's call had already come to her, and at Oxford the problem of the future met her and terrified her at times. At Wycombe it was merged for the moment in the delightful occupation of growing-up in good company.

This does not mean that she was not happy when she went up to Lady Margaret Hall in 1901. She was supremely so, and wrote letters telling of such supreme enjoyment as had never been expected by her on earth again after heart-breaking farewells to Wycombe. But I did not see her during the first two years when this happiness and irresponsibility is most delightful, and after that the thoughts of the future

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would obtrude themselves. Still she enjoyed all her life without exception. Oxford life, even for girls, has very many sides, and they all appealed to her.

She could see Oxford outside the college. She had loved her life there passionately before Professor Romanes died, and all the world of the Scholar Gipsy and Thyrsis was hers. "God bless the plain," she read to me from an essay of Mr. Belloc's. "I am fond of Wantage; Wallingford has done me no harm; Oxford gave me many companions; I was not drowned at Dorchester beyond the Little Hills. Moreover, Cumnor is my friend." We loved to walk or bicycle all over the valleys and hills and lanes of Oxfordshire, seeing those who are invisible, who lived there so long ago. With her I first saw Witham Woods and Bablockhythe; together we fixed definitely (and probably most ungeographically) on the hill of Thyrsis. Oxford itself was a home to her. Lady Margaret was a small and unassuming college. We did not profess to ignore the fact that Oxford was founded and existed for men and not for us, but because we admitted it, we could perhaps appreciate better the thousand associations of every street and lane and town of the river than those who claimed equality if not superiority. It was she who pointed out the snapdragon on Trinity walls, immortalised by Newman, and dragged me, against my will, after early service at Cowley, to Addison's Walk, on my incautious admission that I had never been there before. She enjoyed most racily the Oxford part of *Sinister Street*, "though you mustn't imagine that this sort of book lies about in the Cloisters at —!" Memories of her could never be dissociated from the water-lilies of the Upper Cherwell, the lilacs and red may trees of Norham Gardens, the sound of bells across

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the meadows and the parks, and the violet scent of dead leaves tramping home to tea through November mists from Mesopotamia.

In the narrower world of Lady Margaret Hall she enjoyed to the full the sense of power and unlimited freedom which somehow centres in memory round the black kettles on our own fires in our own rooms. Those kettles made one a hostess, a guest, an independent householder in the hours of getting-up and going to bed, in a way wholly delightful to the sex whose hours are supposed to be perpetually subject to home conventions. Above all they stimulated long and endless talks, and to talk to Fritz was an endless occupation, because she liked to talk about everything. She could discuss hockey in as intimate detail as theology; she did not care for scandal, but she liked saying nice things about people, a far rarer quality. "Well, I suppose it is rather absurd of her to think of taking Theology too, but then just think how prettily she dresses. . . . It is boring going to tea with her of course, but then the Parks look so jolly from her window." . . . "Of course she does look funny, with her hair done in Anglo-Saxon attitudes, but you know she's awfully interesting when she talks about Greek poetry." It is summaries like these I remember, instead of the usual more crude attitudes of twenty toward bores or egoists. She loved silly riddles and funny stories, and of course she could talk endlessly about books. I remember very well one of our favourite amusements, the construction of a dream ideal city. "One of my people would be Socrates, only he would have to be a Christian, as of course he would have been if he had had the chance; and a very good one he would have made too, though I think he would have had decidedly

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Protestant views, don't you? He'd always be quarrelling with Mr. Keble, who is another of my people, and that would be a drawback to the peace, wouldn't it? But I think Socrates would know how to appreciate him and I expect they'd at least be excellent friends. Pascal? Yes, I'd have him, and Father Damien and Mrs. Ewing (how I do love her! Don't you feel as if you knew her quite intimately?). And Strafford, and Laud, and Cranmer—I have a leaning towards him because I sympathise with him so. I know I should have done just what he did, and he must have had a beautiful mind. And Thomas à Kempis, and St. John and St. Paul—but after all it's getting to be just one aspect of what we hope will really be, isn't it?" I remember also heated discussions over Free Will, over Browning's Lazarus, over the next Somerville match, over the necessity of Confession, over the nicest way of travelling from London to the Highlands, over the exact meaning of Lewis Carroll's Snark, over the use of praying for the dead. She was one of those ideal talkers who are interested in everything, who have no solemn voice or hushed whispers, who like listening to other people's views and could never help laughing when she was amused.

It is easy to go on with this side of the picture alone, with her love for Lady Margaret and her happiness there. She had endless friends, she liked her work and was known to be brilliant at it; she loved the games, and the river; she was in the XI at hockey; she loved Cowley St. John's, she was one of the people who find happiness in everything. It was school over again with all the wider openings, the new opportunities in intellectual life, the more stimulating friendships which life at college brings. But there

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was another side too. When the question of "Careers" was discussed, she was rather silent, and in two or three ways she showed, it is clear now, something of what her future was to be.

She had, to begin with, a curious and quite unaffected detachment from things like clothes or furniture or plans for her own social enjoyment. She was interested in other people's nice frocks and hats, and liked everything to look pretty, but she was devoid of any acquisitive sense at all. It was a standing joke against her that she telegraphed once to her dress-maker: "Send me evening dress, blue or pink," and showed the same vagueness in all sartorial questions. Home influences provided her with nice clothes, and, for the rest, she did not despise little things; she merely felt no interest in these. You could not imagine her a bride absorbed in trousseau or in early efforts at housekeeping. The details would have been far more Greek than Greek itself to her. She had never been obliged to worry over ways and means, but if this had happened she would contentedly have let outward appearances go without realising their absence. "I'm such a duffer at that sort of thing," she used to say ruefully, with an absurd sense of inferiority; and her description of her first efforts at needlework at — were very amusing. She was detached from these because she was interested so keenly in higher things.

Then, again, she felt, even at Lady Margaret, the absence of rules. Most girls straight from school rejoiced in the feeling, but it worried Ethel. "The drawback is," she wrote, "that it isn't so easy not to be naughty without rules. I should think on the whole school is the easiest place in the world to be good in." The only time in her life she came within

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speaking distance of unpopularity was when she, with two or three of her year, organised a meeting, to insist on greater regularity in attendance at morning chapels. She could not understand, and was a little vexed by, the laziness and unconcern of public opinion. As a rule, however, it was only rules for herself which she sought and liked : she had no anxiety to make them for other people.

Then, again, she was unique in her work. She had some idea of doing Honour Moderations, but when she decided to take Pass Moderations, and go on to Theology instead, we all regarded her as a wonderful eccentric. Hardly any one had ever thought of doing Theology, the name alone was so frightening, the work so hard. Fritz was interested, however, and quite contented to work, for the most part, alone. She had a scholar's mind and did not need the stimulus of comparison of lectures and coachings which supported most of us in our more ordinary labours. She could be alone and feel no need of others.

She was a little apart, too, possibly, in her position towards home. Always drawing her away a little from ordinary friendships was her love for and companionship with her mother. She was still, she was told at times, a little Olympian. She was always on the side of authority, though that indeed was not difficult with a Principal who was so universally loved and admired. She was so very humble that she probably never realised how the friendship of older and more experienced people came naturally to a mind apart like hers, but this possibly separated her a little, during her last two years, from the heart of small College Politics.

For she was already set apart. Several times during those two years she discussed the future with me,

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usually with dread, and always with the truest humility. "Even if I ever do anything that you don't think right," she wrote, "I hope you will believe that I am only doing it because I believe it to be right myself: what makes me think this is, that one part of me doesn't want to do this thing one little bit, and very often it seems as if *no* part wanted to: and if every part wanted to always, it would seem in a way as if it were only self-pleasing that was deceiving me into doing it." She was very happy in the world of Oxford, and yet God's voice was already calling her to higher adventures. For long evenings we discussed the subject, Fritz ruthlessly demolishing the obvious objections. "Of course I can't bear to think of Mother's being lonely, but it's rather funny, isn't it, that if I asked people whether it would be nice for me to marry a duke, say, or a millionaire, or even to marry at all, they'd all say, 'How *very* nice,' and write warm congratulations both to me *and* Mother? They might, at the end of the letter to Mother, put something about: 'It will be very sad for you in some ways to lose her, but all the same you must be delighted at this—the *dear* child was looking so happy the other day when I saw her.' And among themselves they'd say, 'Well, she's done very well, hasn't she? How delighted her Mother must be.' So there must be something wrong about the reasoning, mustn't there? I never heard any one saying of a girl, 'How wrong of her to marry when she knows how much she will be missed at home.' All the same that argument *is* a very strong one and the one to be most considered."

Then she would shake her head over other arguments. "Of course I can serve God as well in the world if He means me to, but not if He doesn't." . . .

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"Of course, it isn't because I'm better than other people, but for some people this is the only way." . . .

"Of course it may be clear to me that I'm wrong altogether about this idea, but then, you see, it's only the other thing that's clear to me now." Below all these answers was the assumption, so far in advance of her contemporaries, that there could be no possible aim in life but that of fulfilling the Will of God.

It was this strength of purpose which made her a magnet to the weak. All sorts of people asked her advice; every one felt she was something out of the ordinary. She was one of those few people who can talk naturally about spiritual things and never seek an opportunity for searching out unwilling confidences. She took every one's difficulties very seriously, though she loathed affectation or insincerity in her questions. I remember her fury on one occasion with a girl whom I had urged to ask her advice, in a spiritual difficulty, who prepared herself for her interview by lying with hair unbound, weeping on the hearth-rug, in a red flannel dressing-gown. She was less angry, but more amused, by another girl to whom she strongly represented the aid of Confession in the spiritual life. This heroine refused to consider any possibility of help from an ordinary parish priest, and set her heart on consulting the bachelor head of a Theological College. The authorities, not very sympathetic to this point of view, insisted on a chaperon, but even this appanage did not daunt the lady in question. She had consulted me as well as Fritz, and so it was no breach of confidence when we watched the expedition set out together. "I'm very glad she's gone," said Fritz soberly, "but—oh dear, oh dear," and then she sat down in one of her splendid helpless fits of laughter. But for all real difficulties she had



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only the keenest sympathy and endless pity. She was broad-minded towards others, though to her the narrow way of the Church was completely and sufficiently the only way. She had never known doubt, and she had known always the rest and peace to be found in submission to the laws of the Church, and these were the panaceas she offered to others. She always saw clearly the right and inevitable way.

The result of her work at Oxford was a brilliant triumph, and it is only fair to insist on this, partly because it brought such heartfelt pleasure to her and to her friends and partly to emphasise how great was the offering, from our point of view, which she made to God. Her first class was hardly expected; a first without any knowledge of Hebrew is rarely given, and she herself was despondent about her papers. The story of her Viva and the class list was one which I always remembered, and I have refreshed the memory by a letter which told the same—

“I only wish you could have been at Oxford the day I was there to support me during the awful Viva time and the two hours after it while I was waiting for the result! It was simply ghastly. Evie was there, which was a great comfort, and did all the going in and out of school to look at the list, etc. The Viva was *so* horrible. The man, with the sweetest of sweet smiles, asked me the most diabolical questions for twenty minutes. I thought he was trying to pull me up into a Second, and quite gave up all hopes of that after the ordeal; for I scarcely answered any of his questions. Well, I was *awfully* disappointed. As you know, I did long for a Second, and I felt I had quite dished myself. Evie and I went back to Gunfield to lunch, and I don't know what any one talked

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about. I was quite numb with disappointment and misery—I made Miss Wordsworth think I was going off directly, because I couldn't bear the idea of coming back to tea with her after the list was out and telling her I'd got a Third. We took our boxes to the station and then we went and sat in Magdalen garden for half an hour till three, when the list was going to be out. It was broilingly hot, and everything was so beautiful, but I never felt so blankly miserable! At last three came, and Evie went to look. She had settled a signal—one arm raised for a Second, two for a Third, nothing for a Fourth, or Plough. We made no provision for a First—it never crossed my mind! Well, she was gone for a thousand years at least, and at last I couldn't bear it, and went towards the schools. I stood at the opposite side of the road, and Mr. Kidd kept coming to the door and looking up and down the street, evidently in search of me—he was an examiner, you know, as well as my tutor; but I wouldn't go up to him till I'd seen Evie's signal. However, at last I could bear it no longer, and crossed the street meaning to go into schools myself and look. At that moment both Evie and Mr. Kidd came out—Evie simply rushing and waving her arms about, not in the least like any signal we had arranged! They both ran up to me and seized my hands. 'It's a First.' 'It can't be,' I said. 'Yes, it is!' said Mr. Kidd, nearly shaking my hand off. I was simply stunned, as you can imagine. I just, with Evie's help, managed to send off a wire to Mother and buy a lot of p.cs. to write in the train. Mr. Kidd took me home with him, and told me all my marks. It was rather a near thing—they'd read my papers through twice to make sure, and some three times, and my Viva had helped after all. But they

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had no doubt in the end, though the list was an hour late in coming out all owing to me ! Mr. Kidd said some of my work was the best sent in, in an exceptionally good year. It's very conceited to say all this, I know, but I don't mind being conceited to you. Every one has been so *ripping* about it. . . . This makes one want to be good most tremendously, much more than some awful sorrow would, I think."

That is a picture of all her humility and brilliance, her popularity and her simple-mindedness, and that is the one left to us all in our memories of Fritz at school and college. It stands, however, for even more than that. Crowned by her dedication to God and her life in religion, it stands as a symbol of the hopes for the future which the Church of England surely holds for her children. Fritz had had everything: popularity, friends, talents, happiness at home, good looks and charm, health and amusement; she was more than willing to give them all to God. She had had a theological training which had shown her all the weak points of our Church, the strong points of others and the heritage of centuries of doubt; she never hesitated, however, in allegiance to the Church. She sacrificed her gifts, as many thought, by going to —. There, however, every single one of her talents was used in the service of God and others. In days when we hear so much of the failure of the Church, intellectually and spiritually, her life surely stands as a sign to show it is still the star by whose guiding kings may yet ride to the Cradle of Bethlehem. In her we could see the deep devotion to the heritage of the past which the Church of England owes; in her also, by birth and education, that hope of a future which can meet new knowledge and new

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problems without fear or hostility. That by her life and death she could prove how great a capacity for holiness and happiness the Church has still for her faithful children, would have seemed an unbelievable honour to her, and yet to those who are left her life seems no unconvincing proof.

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IN the November (1914) number of the *All Saints Parish Paper* (which is sent far and wide) appears the lovely little notice which I have added to the two "Appreciations." It comes from the pen of our dear Gwenny Palgrave. Mr. Mackay prefaced it with a few words—

I am grateful for being allowed to publish the following sketch of Sister Etheldred.

Perhaps to those who never knew her it may sound exaggerated in the variety and quality of the praise it bestows upon her. But it is not. It merely puts together into a picture the various beauties her friends saw in her. As Dr. Holland has said of her, the beauty of her spirit, mind, and body made a perfect harmony. She was a vision of beautiful womanhood raised to the highest level of spiritual being. There was an expression in her face that only Fra Angelico, the painter of Divine Grace, can record—and it is among those whom Fra Angelico saw standing in the heavenly places that we think of her now.

H. F. B. M.

### III.—BY MISS PALGRAVE

Most of us who knew Sister Etheldred in however slight a degree, will not fail to have her dear and

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gracious presence recalled to us when we read the fifth chapter of the Epistle to the Galatians : " Love, joy, peace," these spiritual gifts seem part of her very self.

Others will probably write about her. Some will speak of her splendid six years' work in her Community, of her rare and remarkable theological knowledge and learning—she was an excellent classical scholar—and of her literary gift.

Others must dwell lovingly and inevitably on the saintliness and beauty of her character, the serenity of her soul ; and, again, how this serenity and saintliness were expressed in her face, as it were transfiguring her fine and beautiful features.

Here, I would speak of her as the most delightful companion and friend conceivable : full of initiative and full of enterprise. It was always she who would find new ways along intricate country roads, or be the first to discover in a map the accessibility of some little known church or place of interest. She was so sympathetic that nothing seemed of no interest to her, so large-minded that no line of thought, no point of view differing from her own, seemed entirely estranged from her sympathy, or even regarded with suspicion. There was no narrowness to blind her to the virtues of those whose religious opinions differed most widely from her own. She quickly recognised goodness, and loved it. She had a great perception—a great intuition. She had no *sanctimoniousness* whatever, no speck of a " superior " pose ; her manner was the same to all, humble and absolutely simple.

Her love of children was conspicuous from the time that she was almost a child herself, and she had what I can only call a *Franciscan* " humaneness," a reverence for temporal gifts and blessings, and a wonderful

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devotion and tenderness towards animals, who were a constant joy and interest to her. I see her now, sitting up in bed, a week or two before she left us—a tiny kitten sharing her breakfast, on one side, and a wire-haired terrier on the other.

She was so full of laughter, so ready to see the funny side of things—pathetically so, in her fatal illness, and so full of happiness that any day she might have said, in the words of a French writer: *Ma vie est un Paradis anticipé*. And, through the months of her illness this joyousness remained. She was indeed ready to go, but her own high spirit and her hope of recovery forbade one to think we were to lose sight of her so soon. Only the afternoon before she passed away, she was driving in the Cotswold Hills with keenest enjoyment, rejoicing in the thought of meeting one of her beloved Sisters, who was coming to see her that day. She was so loving; she loved her home, she loved her Community; there was something childlike in its best sense, in the way in which she loved her friends—so purely, so generously, her warm, strong heart gave out so much. For after all, true, high service was her real delight all her life. . . .

“His servants shall serve Him : and they shall see His face.”

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